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GUIDELINE(S) FOR PLANNING A GAMING EVENT  
- CASE WARHAMMER

Degree Programme in International Business  
and Marketing Logistics  
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## GUIDELINE(S) FOR PLANNING A GAMING EVENT – CASE WARHAMMER

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The purpose of this thesis was to create a series of general guidelines for organizing a Warhammer 40,000 gaming event for Warhammer store in Helsinki owned by Games Workshop. The guidelines would help the store prepare a gaming event that attracts more participants and in the long term increases sales and customers. Event participants would have fun and enhance their friendship during the game. The guidelines would also be useful for new staff of Warhammer store in future.

The theoretical part of the thesis studied about event process. The information was gathered from literature, journals and websites. The event process consisted of initiating process phase, planning process phase, implementing process phase, event execution phase, event closing as well as evaluation and after-sales phase. The specific components of planning process phase selected for Warhammer gaming event were: event design, event marketing plan, event logistics plan, risk analysis and evaluation, evaluation and feedback process, and event schedule. Theoretical study on people's motivation to join a gaming event was specifically included when studying event design.

In order to set up tailor-made guidelines for Warhammer store, qualitative research method - interview was used. Eight experienced hobby players were interviewed about their motivation to join a gaming event, as well as what they like and dislike; while the former manager and two former staff members were asked about their experience on every aspect of the event process.

Combining the interview result and theory of event process, general guidelines for planning a Warhammer gaming event were designed. Besides, it was found that 'having a good time and fun' and 'socializing with friends' were the two most important motivation factors for hobby players to join a gaming event. At the end, some recommendations were given for Warhammer store regarding to documentation, security of hobby players' belongings and hosting painting-related mini games. Some suggestions of possible future studies were also given.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Warhammer Age of Sigmar (fantasy themed) and Warhammer 40,000 (sci-fi themed) are miniature board games sold mainly by Games Workshop and created by Citadel (a division of Games Workshop) in 1987. The retail shop Warhammer (formerly named as Games Workshop) not only sells products about the game, but also provides tables for hobby players to play with their miniatures. In Helsinki, the Warhammer store holds gaming night every week and sometimes huge gaming event for the players to compete with each other and have fun.

Whenever visiting the Warhammer store in Kamppi, the author always see the same customers or hobby players, even though there are many more players. Besides, the store was going to change location with fully new staff members and manager who may be inexperienced in holding any Warhammer gaming event. Therefore, the author would like to write some guidelines of planning a Warhammer gaming event, which could attract more regular customers, increase sales in the long term, and be a very useful reference for the new staff in the future.

## 2 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

### 2.1 Purpose

The aim of this thesis is to create a series of general guidelines for organizing a gaming event for Games Workshop's popular board games, namely Warhammer 40,000 (or Warhammer 40k), in Warhammer store located in Helsinki, so that both customers and the shop manager will be benefited. Following the guidelines, the staff know everything that should be prepared or considered, hence the events will be well-prepared and attract more hobby players to join. In the long term, participants who are happy with the events will visit the shop more often, so the shop can gain more customers and hence increase sales in the future. For participants, they will have fun and enhance their friendship during the game. In order to accomplish the

abovementioned benefits, some experienced hobby players as well as a former manager and two former staff members were interviewed, so that all the necessary details about Warhammer gaming events were gathered for creating the guidelines.

## 2.2 Research objectives

There are four objectives in this study. The first objective of this thesis is to create some guidelines of event design including all the crucial elements to be considered for a gaming event and ways to increase people's motivation to join the event, so that the participants would enjoy their time during the event, and may later become new or regular customers of the shop. The second objective is to create some guidelines of a small advertising plan by applying the event marketing mix (product, price, place and promotion) to advertise and inform people about the event, as well as any marketing activities after the event. The third objective is to create some guidelines of a small logistics plan for the movement of facilities before and after the event. The forth objective is to identify any possible risks during a gaming event and provide some guidelines of risk analysis, evaluation and any precautionary actions.

The following research questions would be answered in order to fulfil the abovementioned objectives:

1. What are the phases of an event process and what are considered during the planning stage?
2. What should be included in an event design?
3. What are the elements that motivate people to join the gaming event?
4. What are the event marketing mix for advertising the event?
5. What is the logistics plan for the event facilities?
6. What are the possible risks and how to deal with them in the event?

## 2.3 Conceptual framework

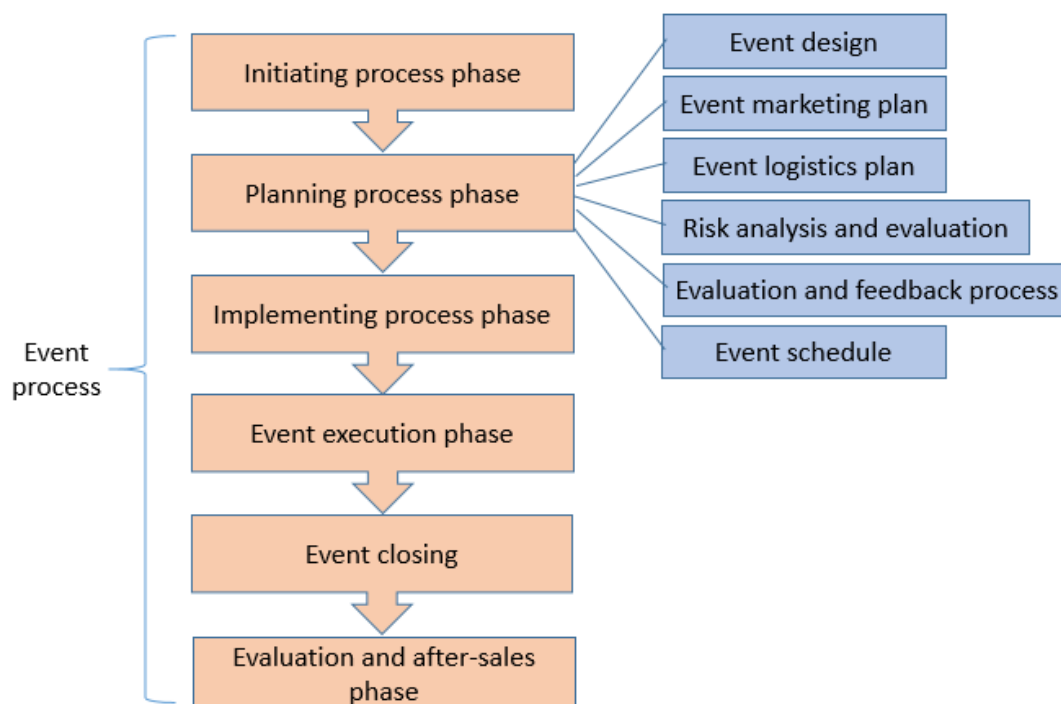


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

## 2.4 Boundaries and limitations

Although there are many types of events, the theory part will only focus on gaming event, which is the main topic of this thesis. The plans will be made particularly for the Warhammer store in Helsinki.

This thesis will involve marketing concept about marketing mix for creating a small marketing plan to advertise the event. However, market research will not be performed and marketing theory like targeting and segmentation will not be discussed because the gaming event are assumed to be focused on existing Warhammer hobby players.

Since only the existing facilities of the shop are used for all Warhammer gaming events, no monetary transaction and budget for marketing are involved, so this study will not discuss the financial management nor creating financing plan for an event.

The shop sells three board games, which are Warhammer Age of Sigmar, Warhammer 40,000 and The Hobbit. However, this study will only concern about Warhammer 40,000 because of time limit and relatively small number of existing players of the other games.

### 3 EVENT PROCESS

Events are special and temporary occasions arranged for different purposes, such as competitions, conferences, exhibitions, and so on. They can also be used as a marketing strategy to catch public and media attention to new products (Avraham 2004, 63). Organization suffering from negative perception by public can also hold an event to improve their image (Avraham 2004, 71). Therefore, every event is unique in term of contents, participants, planning and so on. Hence, participants could get different experiences from each event. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2006, 14-15.) Events can be categorized in term of scale, target (local or community), importance and content (for instance, religious, cultural, musical, business, sports, political, leisure and charity events) (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2006, 15-18; Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 12-23).

Creative objectives as well as efficient and effective event management are essential for a successful event. The event objectives should include required components for the desired quality of an event (feasibility), any financial goal (viability), and attractiveness according to stakeholders' expectation (desirability). (Williams 2012, 76-78.) After the objectives are set, the event starts to proceed according to the following phases, and each of which includes input, process and output (Williams 2012, 78-79).

#### 3.1 Initiating process phase

Initiating process phase is the first step of an event process, because it states why an event is needed (Williams 2012, 78). However, this process begins differently depending on whether similar event has existed or not. If there is a pre-existing



event, the event manager needs to decide if it is still worthwhile creating another event proposal. If the event is completely new, then the event manager needs to consult stakeholders and study about the feasibility of a new event. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 118.)

In this phase, the feasibility study starts by identifying the need of an event and the interested stakeholders, searching for any available resources and estimating any costs and benefits from the event (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 118; Williams 2012, 78). Analysing the availability of these inputs are important, because the event manager needs to estimate the risk and opportunity, and consult the stakeholders for their knowledge and experiences to ensure that the event will bring maximum benefits and minimum costs. (Williams 2012, 78-81.)

As the need of an event is confirmed, as well as stakeholders are available and consulted, the event manager would start brainstorming for event ideas within the framework consisting of purpose, stakeholders involved, date, venue and contents of the event. If there are many options generated during the brainstorming process, the event manager could evaluate and rate them according to the criteria of feasibility, viability and desirability. The best options which are in line with the event objective should be used for the event concept. (Williams 2012, 80-81.)

The output is the event description which describes the event concept in detail. Besides, the event manager should identify the constraints internally and externally. The event manager might be able to adjust with the internal constraints, which are closely related to feasibility, viability and desirability of the event; however, he could not eliminate but may react accordingly towards the external constraints such as delay from suppliers, competition from other competitors and restriction from legal requirement. (Williams 2012, 81.) He may also need to adjust the event objectives because of the constraints (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 120).

### 3.2 Planning process phase

This phase also consists of input, process and output. The inputs of this phase include the event description generated from the previous phase as well as the resources available and promised by the stakeholders. Based on the ‘inputs’, the event manager could start preparing different plans for event regarding to the design, resources, facilities, time, and risk. The outputs of this phase will be event design, marketing plan, logistics plan, budgets, schedule, and risk management plan depending on the need. (Bowdin, Allen, O’Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 121; Williams 2012, 79-82.) The following sections describe the plans necessary for a Warhammer event.

#### 3.2.1 Event design

Event design is an important component of an event, because it defines what kind of memorable and unique experience will be received by the attendees. A good event design should have a good and creative theme, which attracts attention and becomes a selling point of event marketing. When setting up the theme, the event manager should be aware that the venue size and schedule are suitable for the theme; besides, the theme should be specific, so the attendees can grasp the focus of the event. (Ali 2012, 51-54.) Creative theme should be ‘unique, original and authentic’ (Ali 2012, 55), which could be generated through brainstorming without considering any limitation and then combining different relevant ideas to form a suitable theme. In addition, if a similar event was held before, it is better to develop a new theme from the past event design, which could encourage ‘old’ attendees to revisit again. However, since an event will gather people of different religious and cultural background, the event planner should be careful that the event design will not offend anyone as well as violating the law. (Ali 2012, 55-56.)

An event design should also include event elements needed for the event. Event elements can be venue, décor, and resources including catering, entertainment, electronic facilities and staff (Ali 2012, 57; Bowdin, Allen, O’Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 121). The event program is not the only factor of event satisfaction; however, other elements like catering, entertainment and decor are also

important for creating a good environment for everyone to interact during the event (Ayob, Wahid & Omar 2013 23). Therefore, all event elements should be selected carefully, because they affect attendees' experience. For instance, the venue should have proper layout which enables social interaction among the attendees and the host. Besides, the venue size should match the event scale. The catering should be of good quality, consist of different varieties, and match the event theme. Entertainment relating to the event theme can drive attendees' emotion and give them a more memorable event. The form of entertainment can be singing, dancing, drama acting, and so on. Selection of décor constructs how the event environment looks like, so it should also match with the theme. In this case, the event planner needs to consider everything that appears in the whole event environment such as colour, arrangement of tables and chairs, banners, displays, and so on. (Ali 2012, 58-61.)

The event design should motivate people to join the event. For gaming event, Xu & Pegg's (2009, 39, 42) research on participant's motivation to join the Australian University Games reveals that 'socializing with friends to develop friendship', 'competition with others', 'enjoying their vacation outside from home', and 'having a good time and fun' are the main motivation factors. Besides, attendees are more devoted in the gaming event when they can participate in the game. (Xu & Pegg 2007, 42-44.) Ayob, Wahid & Omar (2013, 26) also highlighted in their study on the attribution model that social interaction with others is an important attribution factor to event attendees' satisfaction with an event. Satisfaction from previous event experience also motivates them to join a new game (Xu & Pegg 2007, 42) or re-visit the same event again (Smith 2008, 34).

### 3.2.2 Event marketing plan

Event marketing mix should be adopted to the event marketing plan. There are 4 Ps of event marketing, namely product, price, place and promotion, which can be controlled by the event planner. (Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 218). Normally, the event marketer needs to conduct a market research to analyse what the market needs and identify the potential customers by targeting and segmentation; however, since the potential customers are fixed and the event purpose is defined in this study, the

theory concerning market research, targeting and segmentation are left out. The following part describes the theory of event marketing mix for event marketing.

#### 3.2.2.1 Product

‘Product’ refers to any tangible or intangible thing that attendees experience during an event (Bowdin, Allen, O’Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 209; Gechev 2012, 119; Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 218). Therefore, ‘product’ not only refers to the product displays or used by the attendees, but also the venue, catering, entertainment, staff and event atmosphere (Gechev 2012, 119). People tend to be more confident and encouraged to join an event, in which the ‘product’ has brand names that they are familiar to. On the other hand, completely new ‘product’ can also attract attendees after many marketing campaigns; however, the host needs to satisfy attendees with the new ‘product’ so that the attendees will revisit or even recommend the event to their friends. (Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 218-219.)

Bowdin, Allen, O’Toole, Harris & McDonnell (2013, 211-212) suggested that people’s experience in an event is important, therefore good event programming and event package are essential. A good event programming requires clear and core event concept, matching event and venue, as well as selecting the right performers for the event with criteria. Event packaging refers to additional offerings that add attractiveness of the event, such as free ticket and transport, depending on available resources. (Bowdin, Allen, O’Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 211-212.)

#### 3.2.2.2 Price

‘Price’ refers to the price and cost paid by attendees to attend the event including admission fee, travelling expenses and time. The price should be set carefully based on the demand and supply, so that it is affordable by the market and competitive among the competitors. (Bowdin, Allen, O’Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 213; Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 219-210.) There are several areas that an event planner needs to consider when setting the price.

First, the event planner needs to consider the fixed and variable costs of holding the event. The fixed costs do not change with the number of attendees, such as rent and

electricity expenses. The variable costs change with number of attendees, such as food, drinks and staffs. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 213.)

Second, all the perceived costs for the customers should be considered even the admission fee is zero. The perceived costs not only include money, but also time and effort spent on reaching the venue, psychic costs from dealing with disliked people, and sensory costs caused by uncomfortable feeling when going to the event. As the perceived benefits are bigger than the perceived costs, people are more willing to go to the event. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 213.)

Third, if there is a similar event at the same time, the price of joining the competing event should be considered. The event planner can either set the price the same as or lower than the competing event. If the price has to be higher, more effort should be put on promotion. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 213.)

Forth, the price setting also depends on the event objective. If the objective is 'revenue-oriented', meaning the aim is to earn the highest income possible, then the price should be set at the highest price that the market is willing to pay. If the objective is 'operations-oriented', the price should be set according to the demand, so that the lower the demand, the lower the price. If the objective is 'market-oriented', the price level depends on different choices of event packages. Therefore, it will be lower price for 'newcomers' and for those who will join the event for multiple days, but higher price for those who want to have catering service included. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 213-214.)

At last, as the price is set, other decisions should be made on who will collect the admission fee, where the attendees will pay the fee (whether at the venue, via Internet or by phone), when they should pay the fee (before or after the event) and how they can pay for the fee (either by cash, credit/debit card or other mean of payment). (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 214.)

### 3.2.2.3 Place

'Place' refers to venue where the event is held, wherever admission ticket is sold including Internet and direct selling, as well as the event atmosphere affected by the

physical setting of the venue such as lighting and décor (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 214; Gechev 2012, 120; Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 220). Besides, accessibility, environment, safety and security of the event venue also account for the quality of the 'place' (Gechev 2012, 120).

#### 3.2.2.4 Promotion

'Promotion' in event management refers to the communication with people about the event so as to increase their interest in joining the event (Gechev 2012, 120). There are different ways to promote an event. First, the attractiveness of the 'product' itself can promote the event (Gechev 2012, 120). Other typical marketing communication methods include advertising, personal images, sales promotion, corporate image, direct marketing and public relations (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 219; Gechev 2012, 121; Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 221).

Advertising can be done in different media such as TV, radio, newspaper, vehicles and the Internet as well as through advertising agency. Choice of medium depends on the budget and characteristics of advertising target. The message in advertising should include tangible and recognizable symbol such as trademark, event logo, and pictures of event. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 219; Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 223.) The content of promotional message also depends on the marketer's purpose, such as provoking people's desire to join, making promise about what attendees can expect, producing or changing perceptions, persuading people to join, or simply providing instruction on how to join the event. The message should be repeated multiple times and, if possible, used in multiple media in order to reach as many people as possible. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 219; Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 223-224.)

The advantage of advertising method is that the exposure of the information is higher assuming that the advertising medium is selected based on the target's character; for example, the ad is published on a local newspaper because your target usually reads that newspaper. The disadvantage is that the advertising cost would be high including the cost of producing the ads and advertising on the media. Therefore, the advertising budget should be prepared based on the target sales and profit. Besides, it is difficult to evaluate that method if there are also other competing events, and other

unexpected factors changing your target's intention of going to the events. (Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 223-224.)

Personal selling is to advertise the event face to face with the customers and event sponsors (Gechev 2012, 121). During that process, the sales force will tell the advantage of joining the event, search for and visit other potential customers and at the same time hear customers' expectation of the event. This method ensures that the customers hear the information of the event. However, the number of contacted customers depends on the sales force, so a lot of man power is needed. In addition, effective management support and persuasive information need to be sufficient for the sales force to promote the event. (Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 226.)

Sales promotion is to use different ways and activities to increase customers' incentive and enthusiasm to join the event (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 219; Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 224). The methods of sales promotion can be giving away coupons which can be used during the events, offering discounts, free tickets, free merchandise or souvenirs for all or specific event attendees, contest and exhibition of new or special products which can be sold at promotional price during the event. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 219; Gechev 2012, 121; Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 225.) This promotional method of event is short-term, but it increases attractiveness of the event. There are costs for obtaining sponsors for the coupons, free merchandise and souvenirs; however, many people would be eager to come for them, which means more potential revenue for the event organizer, so it is still a cost-effective promotion method. (Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 224.)

Corporate image is about customer's impression about the company (Megan 2009). It is influenced by the company's performance, position, and exposure to the public by media; therefore, company's image can be changed overnight (Website of BusinessDictionary 2015). Using corporate image as an event promotion method is about utilizing the logo, theme colour and slogans of the company as an element during the event decoration and advertising (Gechev 2012, 121). The effect of this promotional method can be positive or negative depends on the customer's impression about the company. If the customers like the company, they will be

attracted by the company logo and go to the event. However, if the company's reputation is bad, this promotional method actually causes people to avoid that event. Besides, people are immune to that method if they do not know the company at all. (Megan 2009; Website of BusinessDictionary 2015.)

Direct marketing is promoting the event by sending event information directly to potential attendees by e-mails, phone and post. The content of mails can be promotional materials or advertisement about the event to persuade people to join. The advantage is that the customers are informed directly and individually about the event. However, this method cannot be done unless a database of the potential customers' contact is available. The contacts of potential attendees could be collected by the company itself or brought from marketing agencies. However, the collection time could be long and difficult, because the event organizer needs customers' permission to collect and use their contacts for marketing first. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 219; Gechev 2012, 121; Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 225.)

Public relations (PR) is to publicize the event by publishing stories or report in social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn, e-mails, newsletter; as well as other traditional social media like magazine, newspaper, TV and radio (Gechev 2012, 121; Spiewak 2012). It should be done in multiple channels to ensure that the target audiences will notice the event. Spiewak (2012) suggested that promotional contents should be different in different kinds of channels. In general, the PR messages include why people should attend, benefits of the event and event date. In social media such as Facebook and Twitter, event organizer can also post pictures or a few interesting messages everyday as teasers, which create excitement and encourage people to join the event. Interested people may 'like' or 'follow' the page, discuss and even 'share' the post to their friends. E-mails and newsletter include more event details such as event features and reasons to join; they can be sent again as a reminder. The company website should have the event details. If the event organizer intends to have the event mentioned in the newspaper, magazine and radio, he should send invitation early, including event information and pictures of previous or similar events to the press, so they may be interested in the event and write a story about it.



Any guests or celebrities should also be mentioned to attract attendees, press and even sponsors. (Spiewak 2012.)

The PR method is an effective way to increase public awareness of the event. Costs may be involved such as sending newsletter and invitation, hiring a photographer to take picture of the event for publication later. (Spiewak 2012.) Besides, the media like newspaper will only publish unique and interesting event story and the credibility of the information given by the event organizer will also be assessed carefully (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 219).

Raj, Walters & Rashid (2013, 229) also mentioned viral marketing, in which more and more people are aware of the event through social network or word of mouth. To achieve this, the event marketer needs to use interesting pictures, videos and text, so people would like to share them. The use of Facebook and Twitter to promote event leading people to 'share' the event information in their own page is an example. The same effect also occurs by using blog and chatrooms where people express their opinions. This marketing method can easily and effectively convey the event message to many people at low cost; besides, the use of interesting materials also leads to high response rate. (Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 229.)

Smith (2008) has conducted a research about the effectiveness of event information mix to promote events for New Zealand tourism. He revealed that many event organizers liked using print or broadcast media to promote their events, but the visitors mainly found the event information from brochures and the Internet for more information. Direct mail was useful for those who had membership of the organization. The author also noted that word of mouth and past experience are the most important information channels that also cause people to re-visit the event in the future (Smith 2008, 34-35). Xu & Pegg (2007, 42) also mentioned that satisfied participants tend to recommend the event to others. However, the research data were collected from event organizers and event visitors in New Zealand (Smith 2008, 25-26), so the result may not apply to every event in the world.

### 3.2.3 Event logistics plan

Event logistics is about movement of items and people to the event venue before and during the event as well as returning them after the event (Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 276). Elements needed in the event logistics can be linked as a system, in which elements are grouped in three stages of time, which are ‘supply of customers, products and facilities’ when preparing for the event, ‘event site logistics’ and ‘event shutdown’ (Figure 2) (Bowdin, Allen, O’Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 353).

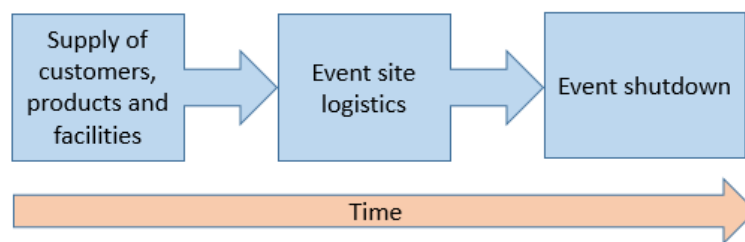


Figure 2. Simplified event logistics system (Bowdin, Allen, O’Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 353)

#### 3.2.3.1 Supply of customers, products and facilities

The supply of customers could come from different geographical areas based on marketing effort. Hence, customer transport is included in the logistics plan. The logistics plan is adjusted according to the number of attendees and the areas they come from; therefore, availability of parking slot, arrangement of bus service to bring those people, as well as the accessibility of the venue will be considered. The venue should be near to transport or parking facility with good traffic control, because attendees’ first and last impression of an event hospitality comes from their arrival and departure experience. (Bowdin, Allen, O’Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 354-355, 358.)

The supply of customers also determines the logistics planning on ticketing and queuing. If attendees are required to have admission ticket, the logistics plan should include the artwork and contents on the tickets, printing schedule of tickets, how the tickets will be sold and distributed before the event, as well as how they are collected and security of money from ticket selling during the event. If it is a free event, the plan needs to have a way to control the number of attendees. Queuing should be

arranged for ticketing, parking, refreshment, toilets and seating. Careful planning should be made for queuing, because the waiting time could diminish attendees' event experience, especially for free event which may attract too many attendees. What to consider regarding to queuing includes number of possible queue, time when queue is formed, number of staff members to control the crowd, greet and collect ticket, any signage for direction, how to entertain the queuing people to reduce their perceived waiting time, any protection against the sun and rain and partitions of crowds. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 355-357.)

The supply of all products and services that are used to create attendees' event experience are considered in the logistics plan. A product portfolio can be made in this case. It could include, for example, entertainers who perform in a large event or festival, speakers for a conference, products for an exhibition, and even venue facilities. If some products are imported from overseas, the logistics plan also considers the transport, custom clearance and other import documentations. For guests or performers coming from abroad, the plan would include picking them up from the airport, helping them get familiar with the event venue, providing them event kit which includes event programme, rehearsal time, accommodation and so on. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 358-359.)

Supply of facilities are infrastructure needed in the event site. They include, for example, place to store food and drink, equipment, toilets, electricity, sound system, seats and tables. Some facilities may require advanced booking or hiring and preparation, so the lead time to obtain those facilities is also a component in the plan. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 360.)

### 3.2.3.2 Event site logistics

The event site logistics is about the movement of people and materials, as well as the communication of staff and attendees inside the event venue. There should be roads for their movement, including flow of attendees and supplies, installation or removal of equipment and waste disposal. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 360-362.) Before moving materials to the event venue, the nature of the materials should be checked if there is any restriction in packaging and labelling required during the delivery. (Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 283-284.) For big event,

event organizer may consider applying for road closure, so that only the attendees and local people can use the road in order to ease the traffic; he could also consider restriction in vehicle speed near the event venue to ensure attendees' safety (Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 280-281).

If there is catering in the event, the logistics plan needs to include storage and distribution of food and drink according to the health and safety regulations. Other things to be considered are location and required infrastructure for serving the food, setting up of food stand, person-in-charge (staff or subcontractor), catering for special guests and cleaning arrangement. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 367-368.)

A logistics plan for moving of equipment and evacuation of people in case of emergency should also be considered. The emergency route should be clearly marked and always be kept clear throughout the event. In addition, the first aid kit should be accessible easily. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 361; Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 281.) An emergency plan could be created to describe in details what to do in different incidents; the information could include identifying the person-in-charge, decision about event progress, emergency routes, evacuation procedures, warning procedures, as well as location of emergency kit, ambulance loading points and nearby hospitals. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 368-369.)

A simple communication plan could be made for the staff in the event, including name, responsibility, location and contact information of the staff, as well as to whom the staff should report, depending on the size of the event. There are different types of communication methods for effective transmission of information between the staff and attendees. Staff members could use two-way radio and phone to contact each other. For attendees, signage, bulletin board, sound system and programme information printed on paper could be used. Other methods, such as flag in sports event, and television in a huge exhibition may be used in some special events. If signage is used, there are several things to be planned such as type (pictures or texts), placement, accessibility, maintenance and removal of the signs. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 362-364.)

If the event venue is big, a site map can be drawn for customers and staff. The map should be clear and simple, so people understand how to go to the place and facilities. Different maps are made for different stakeholders; for example, a map at the back of ticket shows how to get to the event venue; a promotional map for attendees in a festival event shows the points of interest; a logistics map for staff shows storage area for equipment and food, administration room and preparation room. In general, a logistics site map should include the elements like scale, direction, legends, entrances, exits, roads, parking lot, emergency equipment like first aid kit, lost and found, toilets, refreshment area, and so on. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 373-374.)

### 3.2.3.3 Event shutdown

The logistics plan for event shutdown is about turning the event site back to normal; it is also similar to project closure in the aspect of project management. The logistics task after the event depends on the size of event. Therefore, a small event at the stage of event shutdown may only include clean-up activities such as dismissing the crowd, shutting down or removal of equipment, cleaning the floor, checking the venue, dealing with the lost and found items, handing over the venue; while a big event could also include celebration party for the event success, thanking those who have participated in the event (such as donor, sponsor and staff), releasing contracts with subcontractors, paying the bills, reviewing the event, conducting marketing research on people's reaction and collecting records about the event for the purpose of marketing in the future, preparing reports about the event and so on. In short, the plan for shutdown could include a list of tasks, who is responsible, schedule and even risk analysis. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 370-371.)

Even the plan seems to be perfect, unexpected circumstances sometimes happen. Therefore, when implementing the plan, it is important to pay attention to the details and evaluate the whole process for improvement in the future (Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 276).

### 3.2.4 Risk analysis and evaluation

In an event, risk is defined as possibility of failing to achieve the event objectives (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 319; Ritchie & Reid 2012, 154). Risks can cause harm and loss, which could not only be financial loss, but also damage of property, injuries and ruining an organization's reputation (Ritchie & Reid 2012, 154). Therefore, risk management is essential for event planning. By adopting the five steps of assessing risks in workplace suggested by Health and Safety Executive (HSE) (2015), Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell (2013, 320) have created nine steps to assess risks of an event (Figure 3).

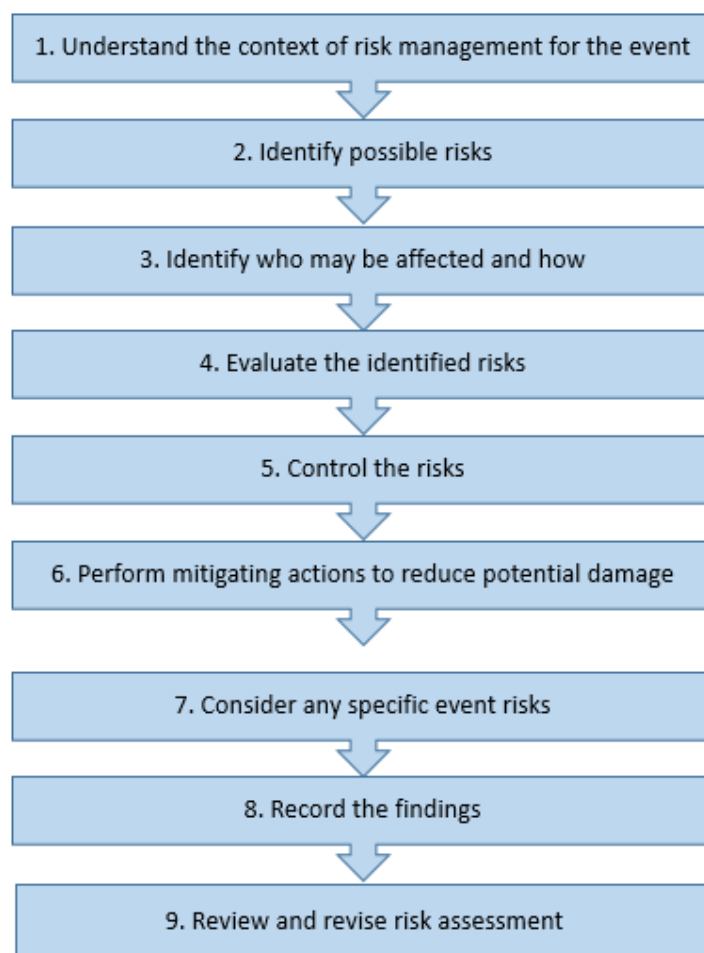


Figure 3. Nine steps of risk assessment for an event (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 320)

The first step is to understand the context of risk management for the event. The context is everything about the event, such as the event design (event type, nature

and objectives), available resources, structure of event management, company culture, stakeholders (such as attendees, event organizers, sponsors), and SWOT analysis of operating environment of the company; all of which are changing all the time due to dynamic business environment. By identifying them, it is easier to indicate the possible risks of holding the event and the risk propensity of the organization. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 321; Ritchie & Reid 2012, 156-157.)

The second step is to identify the possible risks. As an event planner may not know every area of an event, it is better to consult and communicate with internal stakeholders (staff) and external stakeholders (such as equipment suppliers, participants, government authorities and sponsors). (Ritchie & Reid 2012, 156.) It is possible to activate effective communication by holding a meeting to gather those stakeholders. The meaning of this meeting is to gather their expertise and help them realize that minimizing event risks is everyone's responsibility. During the meeting, the event staff could gain insight of all the possible risks and learn how to minimize or control the risks by using the risk management strategies developed together in the meeting. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 321; Ritchie & Reid 2012, 156.)

Risks can come internally from the organization itself and externally from economic, political, social, environmental and technological aspects which cannot be controlled by the event organizer (Ritchie & Reid 2012, 154). There are five main kinds of event risk, which are health and safety risks concerning the environment and security, crowding which can cause traffic and security problems, environmental risks caused by bad weather and climate, alcohol and drug risks may cause violence, damage, financial costs and bad image, as well as legal risks due to violating local regulations (Ritchie & Reid 2012, 158-161).

There are some techniques for risk identification: identifying risks by studying the 'work breakdown structure', which defined all the tasks or areas needed to create the event (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 275-276); rehearsing the event in a small scale in order to test the facilities and fix any problem already before the official event date; using SWOT analysis to identify internal risks from

company's weakness, and external risks from threats outside the company; using result-to-cause method to derive the causes of problem by analysing any potential negative consequences; reading previous incident report to predict any possible bad incidents; suggesting some negative scenarios to stakeholders who will response in their own opinion about possible bad consequences and contingency plan; consulting experts who can describe relevant information for more accurate risk identification. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 321-323; Ritchie & Reid 2012, 157.)

The third step is to identify who may be negatively affected and how it may happen. They can be those who work at the site and are directly exposed to event risks, such as event staff; and also those who are not familiar with the event venue, such as attendees, subcontractors and outsiders who may be affected by the event. If possible, the event organizer could ask the staff to brainstorm what bad situation they would encounter, and suggest any solution to handle the risks. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 323; Website of Health and Safety Executive 2015.)

The forth step is to evaluate the risk. As the risks are identified with accurate description, they can be evaluated by using risk assessment matrix. First, the risks are rated in term of consequences on a five-point scale (1-insignificant, 2-minor, 3 moderate, 4-major, 5-catastrophic); the event organizer can rate the consequences based on financial loss, any injuries or death, any disruption to event activities, social impact and effect on company's reputation. Next, likelihood of the risk to occur is rated on a five-point scale (1-rare, 2-unlikely, 3-possible, 4-likely, 5-almost certain). Then, the risks are mapped based on the rating in the risk assessment matrix (Table 1), which indicates the risk level (low, medium and high). (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 324; Ritchie & Reid 2012, 162-163.) Using risk assessment matrix is a scientific method to evaluate risk level and assist in deciding risk control strategy (Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013, 176); however, the rating is subjective because it depends on the risk propensity of the event organizer. Therefore, if the event organizer is more risk-tolerated, the rating will be lower. (Ritchie & Reid 2012, 164.)



Table 1. Risk assessment matrix for risk mapping (Ritchie &amp; Reid 2012, 163)

Likelihood	Consequences				
	1	2	3	4	5
5	Medium	High	High	Very high	Very high
4	Medium	Medium	High	High	Very high
3	Low	Medium	High	High	High
2	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
1	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High

As the levels of the risks are defined, the event organizer can decide risk management strategies for them in order to reduce the bad consequence or likelihood of the risk to occur (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 326). He can either control the risk (step 5) in order to prevent/avoid the risk or do mitigating actions (step 6) to minimize negative consequences from the risks. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 324-325; Ritchie & Reid 2012, 164-165.)

The fifth step is to control the risks. If a perceived problem may have a high level of risk, it is better to prevent or avoid it. (Ritchie & Reid 2012, 165.) There are different risk control strategies: cancelling the event such as cancelling outdoor event to avoid the risk of getting electrocution; doing precautionary action to eliminate the risk such as placing metal detectors to ensure no weapon brought to the event; preparing a plan which enables quick response to minimize the negative impact of risk such as having medical staff; creating a back-up plan such as preparing an indoor activity in case of bad weather. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 325.) Risk transfer is a risk control strategy; examples include spreading the risk to different areas such as setting up more than one ticket selling point at several different locations; as well as transferring the risk to other entities such as acquiring insurance or hiring security people to take care of valuable items. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 325; Ritchie & Reid 2012, 165.)

The sixth step is to do mitigating actions to reduce the potential damage when the risks are not avoidable. Again, reducing the risk response time by training the staff and preparing sufficient emergency equipment is an example. (Ritchie & Reid 2012, 165.) There are some suggestions to ensure security of the event venue; for instance, preparing a secured area to keep attendees' personal belongings, mapping and checking concealment areas where people can hide weapons or suspicious package,

and assigning security guards to patrol the venue during the event periodically. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 325.) If the event venue has a parking lot, it is better to install more mirrors at blind corners to prevent car accidents (Website of Health and Safety Executive 2015).

The seventh step is to consider any specific risks for the event. It is because different natures of events lead to different risks. For instance, if the event will attract a lot of people, there will be risk concerning crowd-related accidents; in music concert, there may be dangerous crowd behaviours such as stage diving and moshing which can cause injuries; if volunteers are used, they may ignore instruction or be absent whenever they want; in party, people may consume too much alcohol or even drugs that may lead to behaviour problem. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 320, 326-327.)

The eighth step is to make a record of the risk assessment. The purpose of this record is to facilitate the event organizer to monitor the identified risks, as well as keeping as an evidence of risk assessment if any authority asks for it. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 329; Website of Health and Safety Executive 2015.) According to Health and Safety Executive (2015), the record can be in a table form, which contents include name of identified risks/hazards, who and how the people would be harmed, which precaution actions are taken, what other tasks are needed to control the risk, person-in-charge, by when the tasks should be taken, and actual date when the task is done. Raj, Walters & Rashid (2013, 177) stated that if any identified risk really happens, the actual consequences, such as number of injuries, should also be documented, in order to facilitate the evaluation of risk control strategy.

The last step is reviewing and revising the risk assessment. It is better to evaluate the risk assessment time to time even when the event is on-going, because there may be unexpected incidents which could create more risks. Besides, more problems may be spotted based on the staff's on-site experience and feedback, hence the current risk control strategies may need to be improved, or more actions are needed to control the risks. Then, the risk assessment form mentioned in step 8 should be updated. Reviewing risk assessment is an important step, because it will be a reference for

planning risk control strategy in future event. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 329; Website of Health and Safety Executive 2015.)

### 3.2.5 Evaluation and feedback process

Event evaluation is a process that during implementation of an event, a range of variables is observed, monitored, measured and assessed whether the event has achieved its objectives. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 413; Tull 2012, 174.) According to Tull (2012, 176), there are eight steps for conducting event evaluation as shown in Figure 4.

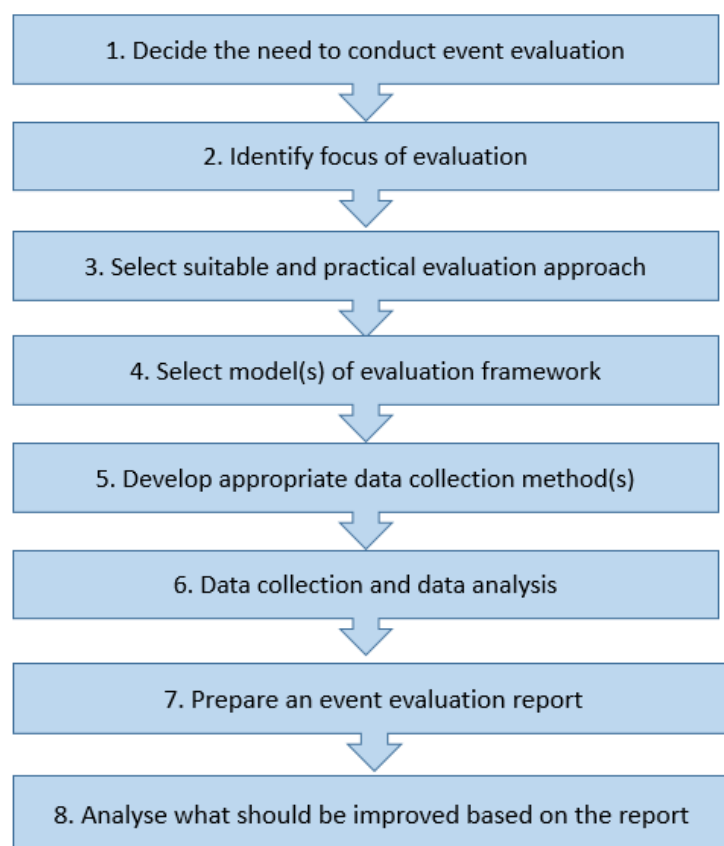


Figure 4. Eight steps for conducting event evaluation (Tull 2012, 176)

The first step is to decide whether it is necessary to conduct event evaluation, depending on the organization's need (Tull 2012, 176). Different organizations may have different purposes of event evaluation; internally, they can check the effectiveness of their event management strategies, evaluate performance of the

event staff, identify other potential targets who they have missed, identify other problems or challenges, and find ways to improve the viability and sustainability of the event; externally, they can check the event's impact on their business, competitors' business of the same industry, media interest, public awareness of products shown in the event, as well as whether stakeholders' expectations are satisfied (Tull 2012, 177).

The second step is to identify the focus of evaluation (Tull 2012, 176). The evaluation focus is defined from three areas; the first area is event elements such as attendees (numbers, demographics, where they come from and their satisfaction), quality of event programme, refreshment, products and services; the second area is event organizations such as staff's performance, quality of resources, cash flow, costs and benefits; the last area is event context such as media coverage, impact of events, people's reaction and perception. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 421; Tull 2012, 178.)

The third step is to select suitable and practical evaluation approach (Tull 2012, 176). It means whether the evaluation will be based on numerical data, descriptive data or combination of both. There are three categories of evaluation approach, namely quantitative and qualitative approach, financial and non-financial approach, as well as economic and non-economic approach. Qualitative approach is used when the data are countable, such as number of attendees which can be collected by conducting survey or head count. Qualitative approach is used when the data are intangible, such as attendee's opinion which can be collected by conducting interview, observation or even discussion forum on the Internet. Financial approach is used for collecting fiscal data, such as cash flow, income and expenditure. Economic approach concerns with data related to tax, employment, and economic activity. Since numerical data are collected, the financial and economic approaches are quantitative in nature. However, non-financial and non-economic approaches involve qualitative data about fiscal and economic issues. (Tull 2012, 179-181.)

The forth step is to select model(s) of evaluation framework (Tull 2012, 176). There are four commonly used models. The first one is impact assessment model which deals with impacts of an event in social, economic, environmental and tourism

aspects depending on evaluation focus. It is better to use this model some years after the event, because the impacts will be more accurately shown. The second model is cost-benefit analysis, which is about costs and benefits to the event. The data can be quantitative and qualitative, and the reliability depends on attendee's honesty; also, it is difficult to compare the data if costs and benefits are intangible. The third model is triple bottom-line approach, which identifies social and environment impacts of the event and their correlation with the event's economic and financial situation. The evaluation result may favour 'green' group, but this approach relies on qualitative data which may cause validity problem. The fourth model is ethnographic profile, which studies people's experience by using observation, interview and documentary. This model could reflect social and environmental impact of event in details, but the data collection is time-consuming and labour-intensive. (Tull 2012, 182-186.)

The fifth step is to develop appropriate data collection method(s) (Tull 2012, 176). Different methods are chosen depending on the evaluation purpose. Structured and unstructured interviews are used to collect attendees' opinions about the event. Interviewers are able to collect details and comprehensive data in order to obtain a full picture of the event; however, it is time-consuming and may be difficult to compare the answers. Observation method can be used to acquire data about attendees' satisfaction with the event. The observer can directly observe attendee's behaviours and acquire detailed description about them; however, the description may be subjective, so the observer should be trained and given adequate guidelines (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 418; Tull 2012, 188). The process can also be time-consuming. Questionnaires and survey can be used to collect data concerning marketing issues, attendees' profile such as feedback, reasons to come, their spending and so on. They are easy to complete, so it is possible to obtain large amount of response. The answers are quantified so it is easy to compare them. However, the answers may not show attendee's motive and response rate can be low. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 419-420; Tull 2012, 188-189.)

The research by Shibli & Coleman (2005, 16-17) evaluated the economic and marketing impacts on Sheffield, UK after World Snooker Championship by conducting a thousand of questionnaires, desk research on hotel booking schedules,

interviews about sponsors and contractors' expenditure and counting the hours of television coverage and television rating. The data collection was in huge scale and seemed to be time-consuming and labour-intensive; however, with available resources, the evaluation methods mentioned in the study may be useful for evaluating huge events.

Brown & Hutton (2013, 43-50) recommended to use real-time data collection method such as recording attendees' emotion and behaviour, GPS tracking attendees' movement and observation without interruption; together with interviews and surveys, the data collected would be comprehensive for event evaluation. However, the research did not mention about asking for attendees' permission before the use of the abovementioned real-time data collection methods.

The sixth step is data collection and data analysis (Tull 2012, 176). At this step, data are collected according to the selected methods. After that, data are analysed. If questionnaire or survey is used, data should be analysed statistically by using, for example, SPSS and spreadsheet on Microsoft Excel. With statistical software, it is also possible to show the correlation of the variables by calculating the significance of the statistical result. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 425.)

The seventh step is to prepare an event evaluation report (Tull 2012, 176). The report includes the analysis result and an executive summary including event profile. The event profile is written based on the analysis result, and can be used to write press release for promotion purpose. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 427.)

The eighth step is to analyse what should be improved based on the findings of the report (Tull 2012, 176). The event evaluation report should be distributed to all stakeholders of the event (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 427). A meeting could be held afterward so that all the stakeholders could discuss what could be improved for similar events in the future. The feedback is crucial as it will affect the preparation of another event process next time. (Tull 2012, 186.)

### 3.2.6 Event schedule (Action plan)

There are tools for event organizer to create the action plan for the event. First, the organizer can draw a product breakdown structure (PBS) showing all the activities (scope of work) needed for the event in hierarchical order. The highest level in the diagram would be the event, and the second level shows all the major event components, for instance, entertainment, venue, décor, catering, event marketing and risk management. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 274-275; Williams 2012, 82.)

Next, according to the second level of the PBS, a work breakdown structure (WBS) showing all the tasks required to produce each event component is generated. The tasks are also organized in hierarchical order. For instance, event marketing includes activities like online marketing and using print media; print media may include poster and flyers; in order to create the flyers, there are sub-tasks such as designing, reviewing, printing and distributing of the flyers. All the tasks and sub-tasks are given a code which will be used to present the order of the completion in the event schedule. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 275-276; Williams 2012, 83.)

As the WBS is decided, the event organizer needs to define the resources, duration and sequence of the tasks. From the WBS, the event organizer can create a resource list showing what resources are needed for the tasks and where to get them. The source of the resources could be either from the organization itself, sponsors or other suppliers. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 275-276; Williams 2012, 83.) After that, the duration of each task is estimated based on experience of previous event or other expert's opinion. Also, the tasks are listed in order; as some tasks are done at the same time or independently, the list will show the total time required to finish all the tasks. (Williams 2012, 83.)

As the abovementioned items are identified, an event schedule can be created. The event schedule can be presented as a Gantt chart. The left-hand side of the chart lists all the task names, their codes, code of the next task, duration, estimated start date and estimated finish date. On the right hand side, grid is drawn and dates are marked

at the top. Horizontal bars representing each task are drawn against the dates, so that the duration of the tasks is visualized on the grid. Milestones that are critical to other tasks in event preparation can be marked on the chart. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 278-279; Williams 2012, 84-85.) Excel 2013 can be used to create Gantt chart, in which 'dates' is used as variable and the length of horizontal bars can be adjusted automatically by changing the duration (O'Loughlin 2013).

Gantt chart is recommended to use as an event schedule because of several advantages. It can be used to monitor the progress of the tasks. The duration is updated on the chart if any tasks need more time. When a change is made, the chart can clearly visualize its effect on the schedule. Besides, the chart can be used as a guide as it summarizes all the preparation activities. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 278.)

### 3.3 Implementing process phase

In this phase, the plans are processed according to the work breakdown structure (WBS). The plans are also served as a guide for the event team in order to ensure that the preparation work is done within the event scope and budget. If any problem arises and the event team needs to find another way to cope with it, the new action and its possible risks should be updated in the event plans. When all the tasks are done, the event facilities should be tested and evaluated to ensure that their performance is perfect. Then, a pre-evaluation report is created and sent to the stakeholders who will approve whether or not the event should be executed. (Williams 2012, 87.)

### 3.4 Event execution phase

At this phase, the stakeholders read the report and approve to execute the event. The event organizer should keep monitoring the event so that the sequence of activities and outcomes are performed as planned. The evaluation of the event also starts at this phase and the evaluation report is produced according to the evaluation process plan. (Williams 2012, 87-88.)



### 3.5 Event closing

As the event ends, the event organizer can hold a debriefing meeting, where all the stakeholders and event staff are invited for providing feedback, and thanked for their effort and participation. Besides, all the accounts involved in this event should be settled so that a financial statement can be created. All the responsibilities stated in contracts with other subcontractors are also fulfilled. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 429.)

### 3.6 Evaluation and after-sales phase

At this stage, the last two steps of the evaluation process plan is implemented. As the data for evaluation are collected and analysed, an evaluation report is created and distributed to all the stakeholders. A meeting should be held so that all the stakeholders can review the report and other documents, and suggest improvement for the next event. The discussion result will be used to create a report for other event in the future. (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 427; Tull 2012, 186; Williams 2012, 87.)

Meanwhile, the event organizer can invite people to post any photos and videos about the event in order to attract people to discuss their feelings and 'like' or 'follow' the company's Facebook and Tweeter page. This is related to public relations. (Spiewak 2012.) The event organizer can also judge the success of the event from their reaction.

If any attendees have bought any products during the event, the organization should also provide after-sales services to them. After-sales services are support services such as warranty, installation and delivery, which are provided after a product is purchased (Fazlzadeh, Bagherzadeh & Mohamadi 2011, 7659; Ladokun, Adeyemo & Ogunleye 2013, 54-55). After-sales service increases customer satisfaction and enhances long-term customer relationship. Satisfied customers may return or even recommend the company or products to their friends. (Fazlzadeh, A., Bagherzadeh, F. & Mohamadi, P. 2011; Ladokun, Adeyemo & Ogunleye 2013, 55, 57-58.)

## 4 RESEARCH METHOD

According to Hakala (1998, 83), everything to be done in a research study should be justified by theoretical background. Therefore, the guidelines of the event planning were designed based on the event process found in a literature, and the concepts used for the plans should be defined (Hakala 1998, 84).

In order to create comprehensive and tailor-made guidelines for Warhammer store, qualitative research method was used, because it helps to collect more detailed information, especially reasons of behaviours and decisions. Besides, sample size was small but focus. (Glenn 2010, 95.) There are advantages and disadvantages of using interview. Since the interview is conducted in one-to-one basis and the questions are open-ended, it is possible to collect more insights of an event and the interviewer can ask for more information if needed. However, the method is time-consuming and the result can be difficult to compare. (Tull 2012, 188; Yin 1994, 80, 84-86.) Besides, the interviewees may just give biased answer, inaccurate answer because of wrong memory or tell what the interviewer wants to hear (Glen 2010, 272; Yin 1994, 80).

Based on this, primary data were collected from eight hobby players, two former staff members and one former manager. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, so questions were prepared and more questions were asked if needed for acquiring in-depth qualitative data (Farquhar 2012, 72-73; Glenn 2010, 247; Hakala 1998, 85). When it was not possible to meet, the interview questions were sent to them by e-mail, which were collected in March 2015. Follow-up e-mails were needed for clarification of their answers.

Based on the theory, two sets of interview questions were prepared – questions for the hobby players are about game motivation and other wishes from a gaming event so that the game design will suit their need; questions for former manager and staff members are about what they have done, their opinion for holding a successful event, event logistics, event promotion channels, any risks and their solutions for previous gaming events. Combining the interview result and theory, general guidelines of different phases and plans were designed for holding a Warhammer gaming event.

#### 4.1 Reliability

A research method with accurate and precise procedure is reliable, so different researchers or the same researcher on different situations are able to obtain consistent results when using the same research method (Glen 2010, 156; Kothari 2004, 73).

To ensure the reliability of this study, the former staff were interviewed. Since they have worked in the store and held many Warhammer gaming events, they know exactly how a Warhammer gaming event should be operated in the store. Only through them, the guidelines would be truly applicable for Warhammer store. Similarly, experienced Warhammer hobby players were interviewed because they know why they are motivated to join a Warhammer gaming event. The interviewees answered all the interview questions personally, so no matter who conducts the same research using the same questions, the research outcome will be the same.

#### 4.2 Validity

Research method is valid when it measures what it is supposed to measure, so that the derived research outcomes would be truthful (Glen 2010, 143; Kothari 2004, 73).

In this case, the design of interview questions contributes to the validity. Therefore, the questions are not leading so the answers truly reflect the interviewees' opinion. The questions are in logical order following the phases of event process. The length of questions is not too long in order to maximize the response rate. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, 124.) Other researchers can use the same questions listed in Appendices 1 and 2 to replicate this study (Glen 2010, 162). The same sets of questions (for the staff and the hobby players, respectively) were answered by every interviewee in order to ensure that the collected data are logically consistent, hence the author could gain sufficient data and insight of a Warhammer gaming event from different perspectives before formalizing the best guidelines for the store. (Glen 2010, 161-162.) The interview questions regarding to the operation of Warhammer gaming event being sent to three people were also meant to facilitate the author to verify the objectivity and accuracy of the data (Glen 2010, 160-161).

## 5 WARHAMMER

Warhammer Age of Sigmar (fantasy themed) and Warhammer 40,000 (sci-fi themed) are miniature tabletop war-themed board games sold mainly by Games Workshop and created by Citadel (a division of Games Workshop) in 1987. The games are famous in many countries like UK, USA, Canada, Japan and some other EU countries. (Website of Game Workshop 2014.) The retail shop Warhammer (formerly named as Games Workshop) is opened around the world, selling painting and modelling equipment for the miniatures and books related to the game characters, as well as providing place in the shop for the hobby players to play or build their miniatures. In Finland, the game is not very big, and there is only one Warhammer store located in Kamppi, Helsinki.

The scenario of Warhammer Age of Sigmar and Warhammer 40,000 happened in Warhammer world but in different timeline. The background of Warhammer Age of Sigmar was similar to late medieval time on Earth where different races like dwarfs, elves, lizardmen, human and other evil creatures have battles against each other (Website of Warhammer wiki 2015). However, Warhammer 40,000 happens in 40,000 AD when there are wars between humans and multiple alien races in the Milky Way Galaxy for different reasons based on the background stories of characters (Website of Warhammer 40,000 wiki 2014).

The size of a game varies and there is no official limit. However, the players can negotiate with each other how many points they will play; if it is an in-store gaming event, the shop decides the game size. There are roughly three types of game, which are fast-paced game (500 points), 'regular' game (1,000-2,000 points) and Apocalypse game (over 2,000 points; commonly 10,000 points if there are four players on one side). (Ranne, personal communication on 8.10.2015.)

In order to play the game, the player needs to first select the army he wants to play with. Next, he will buy codex and rulebook of his selected army to study about their story, as well as point, skills and weapon choice of different army units. Since each game has restricted amount of point, the player needs to plan which miniatures he will bring to the game; hence, he needs to design his army list, i.e. combination of

the army units. Then, he will buy the miniatures according to the army list, assemble and paint them in the shop or at home. (Website of wikiHow 2014.) A new player can also buy a starter set that includes some unpainted miniatures of two fixed races, a booklet of quick reference of those miniatures and a small core rulebook (Website of Games Workshop 2014).

Two or more players can play in a game. At the beginning of the game, each player will deploy their miniatures on the game board which has scenery, building and certain terrains that have advantages or disadvantages to the characters. Warhammer game is turn-based strategy game. In each turn, the player will throw some dices, which decide whether the character can move (moving phase), any magic to cast (psyche phase), how many damage or shoot the character can make as well as whether the opponents can be saved by their armors (shooting phase), and whether the character can charge for close combat (assault phase). The whole game can last about 5-7 turns. (Website of wikiHow 2014.)

## 6 EVENT PROCESS – GUIDELINES FOR PLANING A WARHAMMER GAMING EVENT

### 6.1 Initiating process phase

Initiating process phase starts by identifying the need to hold an event. For Games Workshop, there are a few reasons why gaming events should be held. First, gaming event attracts hobby players to play in the shop regularly, as the hobby players would feel welcomed to visit and play there. The excitement from the event and display of new products also attract the hobby players to buy something, hence leading to increase in sales. Besides, the crowd in the shop appears to be better and catch passers-by's attention. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015.) Second, after buying new miniatures from the shop, the event will become a 'playground' for hobby players to test their new army. Third, an event may challenge some players who would be encouraged to take their hobby further by starting and finishing a new 'project', i.e. buying, assembling and painting

new miniatures. (Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.) Therefore, holding a regular gaming event is equivalent to providing ‘constant hobby activity’ for hobby players (Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015).

Depending on the kind of event, Warhammer gaming events are held from few times a week to 2 times a month. Bigger events may be broken down into several smaller events throughout the week. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015.) In summer 2014, Warhammer 40,000 Summer Campaign - an Apocalypse game was held 8 times throughout the summer from June to August. The game involved massive amount of game points (for instance 2,000 points per player on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2014 game), an in-depth story background, special rules or objectives in each game and many hours to play. (Facebook page of Warhammer – Helsinki, 2015.)

Regular or fast-paced games are simple to hold so they are organized few times a week. Each game day is held for specific type of hobby player or Warhammer game (Figure 5). Beginners’ day aims to teach new players how to build, paint and play with their miniatures; in Warhammer 40K Day, the gaming tables are reserved only for the Warhammer 40K hobby players; and Warhammer 40K Veteran Day is for experienced Warhammer 40K hobby players to gather and play. (Facebook page of Warhammer – Helsinki, 2015.)

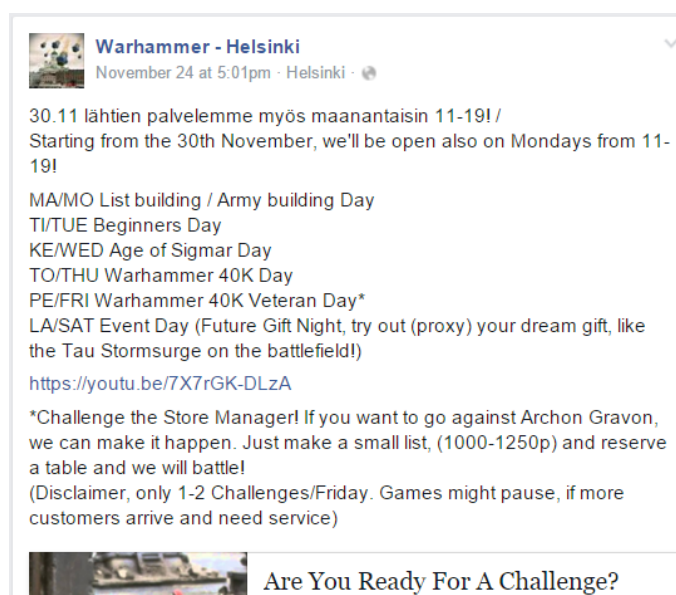


Figure 5. Weekly regular game day in Warhammer store (Facebook page of Warhammer – Helsinki, 2015)

Basically, only staff members, manager and participants are involved in a gaming event. However, if posters or flyers are used, the head office in Nottingham or a printing agency will deal with them. Occasionally, the head office would also send some specific instructions about an event. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

Event resources are usually taken from existing store supplies, therefore the budget is 0€. However, if it is a big event which requires something (such as terrain and buildings on the gaming table) custom built, a budget may be needed, but even then the budget is probably 0€. It is because the custom built items can sometimes be made of existing shop supplies. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

Event ideas are usually generated all the time based on the staff's knowledge of the game, i.e. how the game works and the story behind it. When the staff come up with an idea, they write them down for future use. The staff have a brainstorming session for specific theme. Ideas created by other stores in Europe are also taken for references. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

To conclude, here are some general guidelines for 'Initiating process phase':

- a) *First of all, the store manager and staff members should consider:*
  - i. *Why an event is needed (event objectives):* Create excitement to attract hobby players to come to play and buy something; create crowd in the shop to attract passer-by's attention; for players to test their new army; challenge the players
  - ii. *Who are involved:* Store manager and staff members
  - iii. *Available resources:* Everything available in store supplies, including miniatures and tables
  - iv. *Date and duration of the event:* Few times per week or 2 times per month depending on the game size

- v. *Estimated costs from the event:* None
  - vi. *Estimated benefits from the event:* Increase sales, increase customers and players having fun
- b) *Event idea:* Ideas are generated all the time or during brainstorming session. The staff and manager will brainstorm any event ideas based on the above-mentioned items, knowledge of the game or existing game ideas from other stores in Europe.
- c) *Event description:* At the end of the brainstorming session, an event concept is formed and should be concluded in detail as an event description. The event description should be recorded for future use.
- d) *Constraints:* Within the event description, the staff and manager will identify possible internal and external constraints, and adjust the event objectives if needed. Generally, the staff may face three kinds of constraint:
- i. *Lacking variation of game:* The shop holds gaming events frequently so it can be hard to keep the game content new and interesting. The best way to overcome this problem is to keep brainstorming together or asking the participants' opinion about what they would like in an event. (Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)
  - ii. *Time:* Since games are held few times a week, the event cannot be too complicated, otherwise there will not be enough time to prepare. Therefore, it is better to keep the game simple. Due to limited time, it could be challenging to gather the right 'armies' or teams. If everything fails in the event, the staff need to improvise. (Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015.) Therefore, it is better have simple and workable event which allows short and easy preparation.
  - iii. *More strict instructions given by the head office:* Those instructions add conditions to an event, for instance, no entrance fee, avoid using products manufactured by other countries, or specific event purpose such as selling a particular product. The staff need to work around



these instructions when designing a gaming event. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015.) Note that it may be easier to gain sales if entering an event requires purchasing a product. However, free entrance event tends to attract more people (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 355-357). The staff then need to really come up with interesting gaming event and encourage the attendees to improve their 'army', i.e. buying more products, so as to have better chance to win in a game.

## 6.2 Planning process phase

### 6.2.1 Event design

#### 6.2.1.1 Game setting

The shop has held many kinds of games focusing on one player at a time or massive multiplayer, including campaigns, tournaments, smaller or bigger games, games tied in to a building or painting event and all-night games. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.) Appendix 1 shows the gaming events which have been held in Warhammer store in Helsinki from 1 October 2011 to 24 October 2015 and recorded in the event session of their Facebook page.

Eight hobby players were interviewed about what kinds of Warhammer gaming event they prefer. Four interviewees prefer small and medium-sized game (500-1,500 points), because the game lasts shorter, so that they can experience different army setup and combination. Besides, it is too expensive for them to buy many miniatures to play bigger games. (Huuskonen, personal communication on 21.5.2015; Neumann, personal communication on 16.6.2015; Ranne, personal communication on 6.6.2015.) Bigger games usually turn out to be a chaotic 'shouting contest' because many players are playing so every player becomes impatient and asks for playing his turn 'now', hence leading to confusion on game phases (Vuorinen, personal communication on 24.5.2015). However, three hobby players prefer Apocalypse games that involve many players (maximum 50 players) and two of them play rarely (about once

a year and few times in a half year). Three interviewees mentioned that they prefer non-competitive casual games.

It is interesting that all interviewees (hobby players) regarded modelling and painting of miniatures as an important part of Warhammer game. Three interviewees would like those activities included in a gaming event. Painting and building let hobby players' imagination run wild. Hobby players can recreate the army units' stories through building and customizing the miniatures. The building process also trains their ability to detail and general focusing. Since the miniatures are fully built by the players, they feel proud when playing with them. They enjoy seeing other possible variations of colouring style and miniature customization in gaming events. (Hietala, personal communication on 24.8.2015; Neumann, personal communication on 16.6.2015; Rantanen, personal communication on 8.12.2015; Ranne, personal communication on 6.6.2015; Ranne, personal communication on 7.6.2015; Vuorinen, personal communication on 24.5.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

Since Games Workshop holds gaming events, it is better to know what motivate Warhammer hobby players to join a gaming event. Therefore, eight hobby players who have played Warhammer 40K for 5-26 years were asked to rate the importance of nine selected motivation factors for participating a gaming event based on the research of Ayob, Wahid & Omar (2013, 26), Smith (2008, 34) and Xu & Pegg (2007, 42-44; 2009, 39, 42). Figure 6 illustrates the mean of rating values of the motivation factors.



Figure 6. Rate of motivation factors for participating a Warhammer gaming event on a scale of 1 to 5 (1= least important; 5= most important)

The result (Figure 6) shows that the most important motivation factor is ‘Having a good time and fun’, which is rated 4.875. All hobby players commented that the story of the army units, strategy, playing as team and gameplay make the game very fun to play and they like them in a Warhammer gaming event. The second and third important motivation factors are ‘Socializing with friends’ and ‘Improving friendship’, which are rated 4.250 and 3.875, respectively. Six interviewees commented that they enjoy spending time with like-minded people, playing, and socializing with fellow gamers, as well as sharing their hobby experiences. (Hietala, personal communication on 24.8.2015; Huuskonen, personal communication on 21.5.2015; Neumann, personal communication on 16.6.2015; Ranne, personal communication on 6.6.2015; Ranne, personal communication on 7.6.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.) The least important motivation factors are ‘Competing with other players’ and ‘Satisfaction from previous gaming event’, which both are rated 3.375. This again hints that hobby players prefer ‘non-competitive casual games’.

Regarding to designing a gaming event for Warhammer store, the former manager and staff members have shared some valuable tips; together with the hobby players’ interview answers and abovementioned survey results, the following guidelines of ‘successful, attractive and the most manageable gaming event’, as well as ‘what should be avoided in a gaming event’ are generated.

In order to have a successful gaming event (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015):

- a) Promotion is very important. The staff should inform as many customers as possible about the event and invite them to participate. This will be discussed more on Chapter 6.2.2 'Event marketing plan'.
- b) The staff should make sure people have fun. To achieve this, an interesting scenario of the game should be planned very well, so every participant knows and attempts to achieve the pre-set goals of the game. When working forward their goals, participants will become committed to the game.
- c) The whole event should be well-planned and fully ready during the day. If anything specific is required, the shop should have enough of it.

How to attract more participants to a gaming event (Hietala, personal communication on 24.8.2015; Neumann, personal communication on 16.6.2015; Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Ranne, personal communication on 6.6.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Vuorinen, personal communication on 24.5.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015):

- a) *Make the event successful:* Attendees of a successful event may recommend their friends to join next event. Friends' recommendation motivates more hobby players to join a new event, as 'recommendation from other players' (rated 3.625) is an important motivation factor for participating in a gaming event. Besides, the Warhammer store also relies on 'words of mouth' as a marketing strategy (more details on Chapter 6.2.2 'Event marketing plan'). However, the next event should have something fresh in order to bring new excitement to people.
- b) *Tie events into each other:* The staff can design multiple related events for a few days or multiple small events on the same day to gather more people. For instance, Gathering of Might aims to encourage hobby players to start building a set of that specific 'army', which can be used to play in another gaming event based on its scenario. Tying a gaming event with painting competition

also attracts those who like admiring professional painting and modelling skills.

- c) *Increase attendees' chance to play:* Small and medium-sized game could be held frequently, because they are fast-paced that increase participants' chance to play. For bigger event like Apocalypse game, staff members should check that every participant's turn will not last too long so as to avoid other impatient participants fighting for their turn and hence the game becoming chaotic.
- d) *Let players meet new and existing players:* Frequent small and medium sized game also let participants meet other fellow gamers. For many hobby players, socializing with friends and improving their friendship are important attributes of motivation to join a gaming event. Beginner-friendly games should be held sometimes because they not only let new players to play with their miniatures, but also meet each other and make new friends.
- e) *Give new inspiration for their hobby:* Playing a game with newly customized miniatures increases hobby players' incentive to join a gaming event. Games relating to painting and customization according to army unit's story or game scenario inspire them to use their creativity and imagination to improve their miniatures and building skills.

What are the most manageable gaming events (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015):

- a) *Mini games and open gaming:* They require the least preparation, so it is fast and simple to run without further or just minimal staff participant. Simple games that can still generate excitement and sales would be the best. Also, mini games are fast-paced so participants will not become impatient easily for their turn.

What should be avoided when holding a gaming event (Huuskonen, personal communication on 21.5.2015; Neumann, personal communication on 16.6.2015; Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Ranne, personal communication on

6.6.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Vuorinen, personal communication on 24.5.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015):

- a) *Competitive events*: Competitive events tend to attract specific type of hobby players (veteran players). The game will become very time-consuming for the staff because everyone takes more time to play carefully. Besides, hobby players in general prefer casual non-competitive games.
- b) *Overly complicated game*: Since staff members have no control over most of the variables (the armies brought by the participants, army list, who will join and time consumption), it is better to keep the game simple. If the game is too complicated, it will create more uncertainty and hence more difficult for the staff to handle.
- c) *Boring unoriginal idea*: If the same kind of game idea is run over and over again, players will be bored and will not be interested to participate in other gaming events.
- d) *Passive staff*: Staff should be active and bring up the gaming atmosphere, so the players will be inspired and motivated to play in the event. Helping the participants also improve customer-company relationship. They should also keep checking everything is fine in the event, act promptly and improvise in case of any problems during the event.
- e) *Certain 'unwelcomed' participants*: 'Unwelcomed' participants are called 'sore losers' and 'bad apples' who behave badly like yelling, swearing, being angry about small things, complaining throughout the whole game, having excuse when they lose, giving up before the opponents can properly win the game and mocking other people. Their behaviour ruins other players' gaming experience and gaming atmosphere. The staff need to talk with them to 'warn' them to behave or ask them to leave.

#### 6.2.1.2 Physical settings

There are specific settings to increase the event atmosphere in a gaming event. First of all, the terrain on the gaming tables are set up as good looking as possible (Vouti-

lainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015). For setting up, the store mainly uses Games Workshop manufactured building and terrain materials, but in case of customized event, other materials like carton papers, wooden, metal, plastic materials are also used. The store also plays music from a CD to enhance the gaming atmosphere. (Ranne, personal communication on 8.10.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015). If there are games linking to some special occasions like specific new release, store birthday and Christmas, the store is decorated accordingly (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015).

#### 6.2.1.3 Roles of staff members and manager

Both the manager and staff members have important roles in a gaming event. Usually the staff members start and run the event while the manager ensures that everything goes according to plan (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015). However, since there were just three people working in the shop, they have some common but critical tasks to do. Throughout a game, the manager and staff members need to keep the gaming atmosphere fun and interesting, especially when they have to personally host and play the game with the players. Usually by acting as a game character or voice effect of an ‘exploded’ vehicle, the players would be impressed and become more devoted to the game.

Before a game begins, the staff members should clarify again all the rules applied to the game to ensure every participant knows what to do. In case of rule disagreements or rules quarrels in a game, the manager and staff members need to be the judge and clarify the situation (Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015). Some players may feel upset about losing a game and do not want to continue, then the manager or staff members should motivate them to think positive and play till the end (Ranne, personal communication on 8.10.2015). In short, the staff members need to ensure everyone has fun in the event (Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015).

### 6.2.2 Event marketing plan

The following guidelines for event marketing plan are generated based on Raj, Walters & Rashid's (2013, 218) 4 Ps of event marketing, as well as the former manager and staff members' experiences.

#### 6.2.2.1 Product

The 'products' of event marketing plan are everything (including product displays, venue, staff and event atmosphere) visible to attendees (Gechev 2012, 119):

- a) *Main 'products'*: The main 'products' are the gaming tables with terrains and buildings so people can play on them. The shop also needs to have sufficient specific fully-built miniatures for game hosting (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015), and certain miniatures related to the event for sales.
- b) *The manager and staff members*: They should be well-prepared and clear about the event rundown. They should be active, helpful and fulfil their roles stated in Chapter 6.2.1.3 'Roles of staff members and manager'.
- c) *Catering*: Drinking (except water) and eating are prohibited in the store (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015). Exceptions are some celebration days such as Christmas party and store birthday that served some biscuits, drink and cakes (Facebook page of Warhammer – Helsinki, 2015). In this case, catering can be stated in the advertising materials to attract people.
- d) *Event atmosphere*: This is related to the physical setting mentioned in Chapter 6.2.1.2 'Physical settings'. The staff can play a music CD distributed by the Games Workshop headquarter, use well-built terrain on the gaming table, and decorate the interior of the store for special occasions (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015).



- e) *A good event programming*: The event programme should match with the event concept and everything displayed in the shop (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 211-212).

#### 6.2.2.2 Price

In theory, 'price' setting of event marketing plan considers fixed and variable cost of holding an event, perceived cost of participants, price of previous similar event and event objective (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 213-214). However, for Warhammer gaming event, there is just entry requirement because the cost of holding an event is usually none as the staff just use existing resources in the store. Gaming events in Warhammer store are market-oriented, and it relies on the staff members to encourage event participants to buy something. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

Entry requirement or restriction differs from game to game. In the past, the store held events for a very small entry fee. For instance, the 'Summer War Camp' event in 2014 required every participant to buy miniatures and building worth 150€ in total (Facebook page of Warhammer – Helsinki, 2015). Nowadays, all events must be free to attend. All gaming events require participants to bring their own miniatures. Some events could be exclusive to specific armies due to the game scenario. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

#### 6.2.2.3 Place

All gaming events are held in the Warhammer store. There is no ticketing selling place since the entry is free.

#### 6.2.2.4 Promotion

The staff in Warhammer store use three promotion methods, which are advertising, personal selling and viral marketing.

- a) *Advertising*: The gaming events are advertised through the Facebook page, flyers and posters (Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015).

- i. *Facebook pages:* The news about a gaming event is posted on their Facebook page (Figure 7). The profile picture of the Facebook page is related to the upcoming event. Figure 8 illustrates an event page of the gaming event Gathering of Might created by the staff. The following information should be included on the event page: Time, venue, game scenario (if there is specific story to that game), rules/conditions, and promoting messages to increase the excitement of the event, as shown in Figure 9. The number of potential and invited participants is also visible. (Facebook page of Warhammer – Helsinki, 2015.)

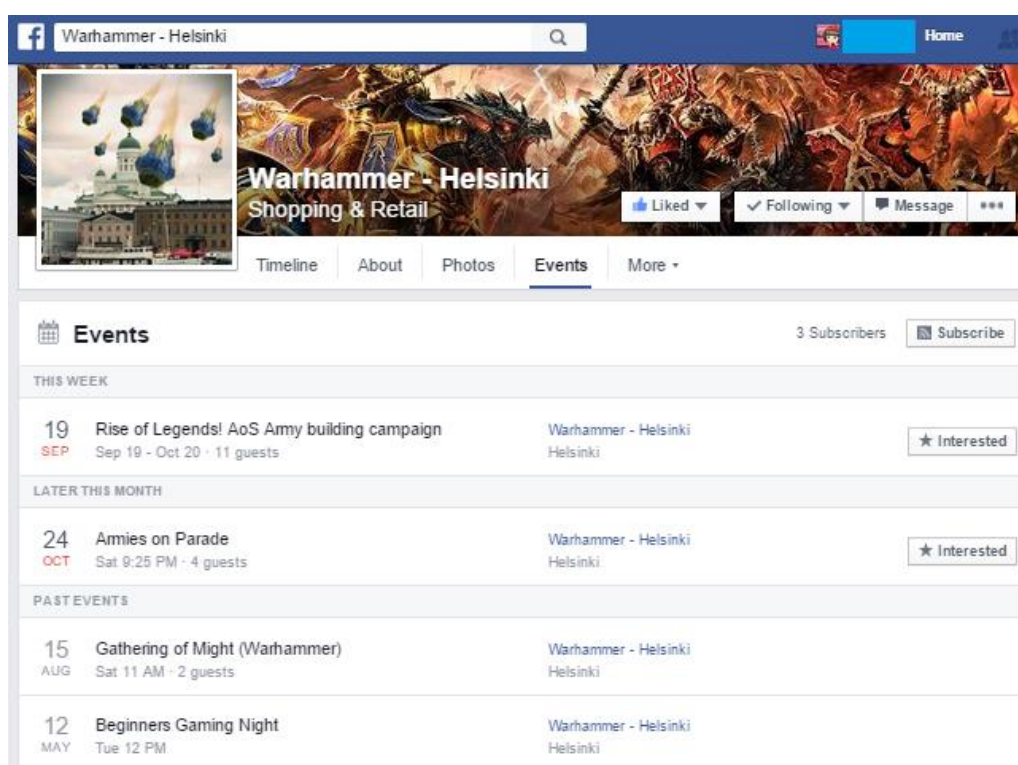


Figure 7. A list of events which are coming up or have been held by Warhammer store (Facebook page of Warhammer – Helsinki, 2015)

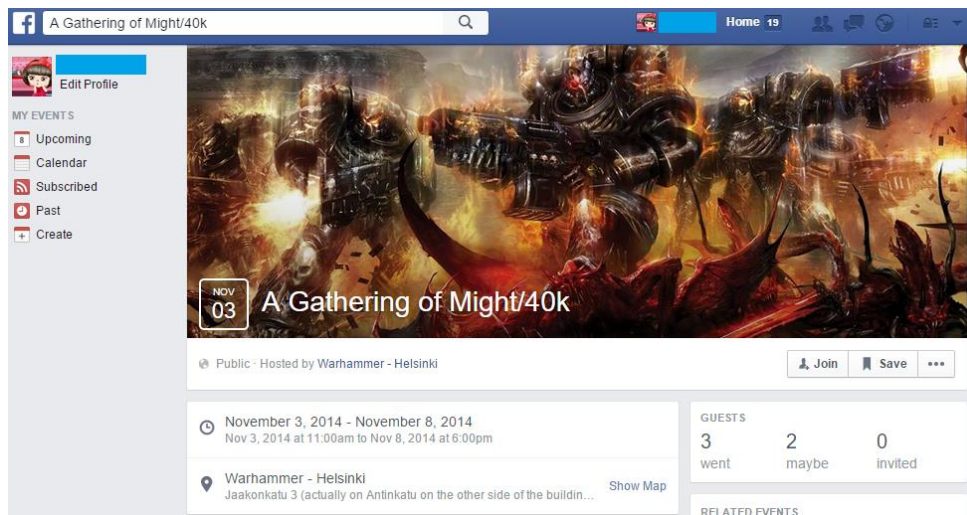


Figure 8. An event page created by Warhammer store on Facebook (Facebook page of Warhammer – Helsinki, 2015)

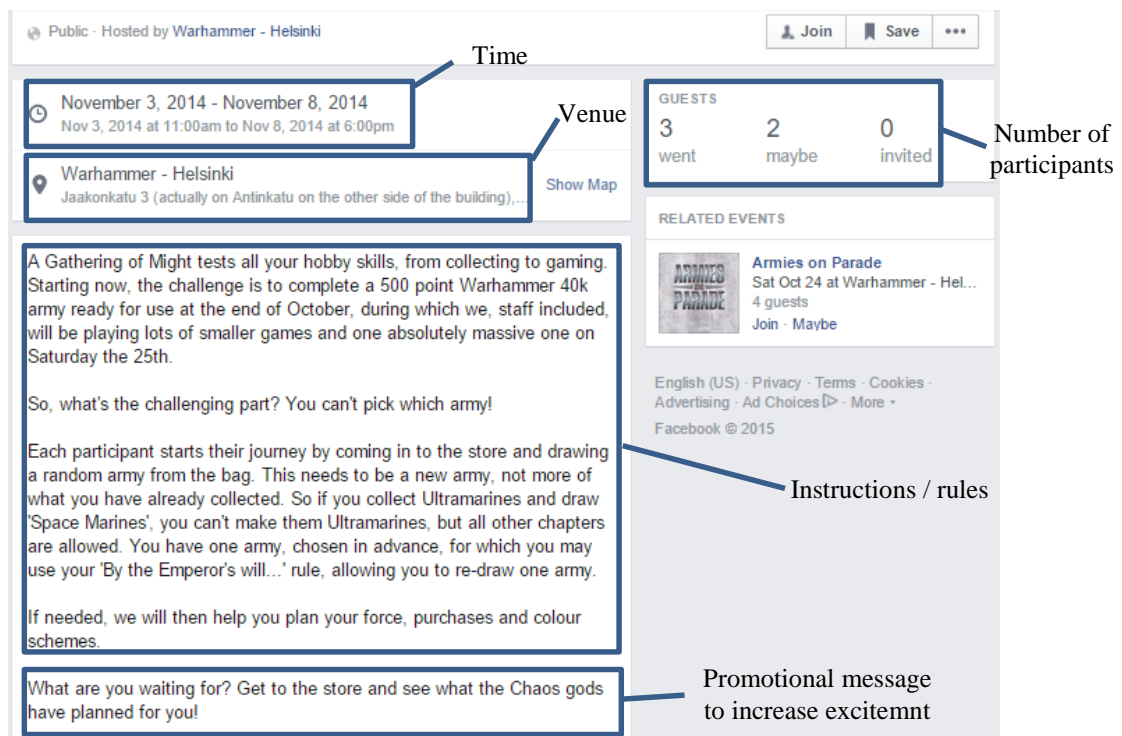


Figure 9. The content of the event page of Gathering of Might on Facebook (Facebook page of Warhammer – Helsinki, 2015)

- ii. *Flyers*: Flyers are small in size (size A5). They are distributed to shop visitors by the staff. (Ranne, personal communication on 8.10.2015.)

Figure 10 shows the flyer of some winter events in 2013.



Figure 10. A flyer of Winter Events in 2013 (Facebook page of Warhammer – Helsinki, 2015)

- iii. *Posters:* Size of posters depends on the types of event. Bigger posters are usually produced for bigger or international events, such as The Fang Painting Competition organized by the Games Workshop's headquarter and Apocalypse game held at the same time in different countries. For smaller events organized by local Warhammer store, a smaller-sized poster (size A4) is used. In 2013, the store held a series of painting classes, for which a small-sized poster (Figure 11) titled as Hobby Bar Menu was used and placed on the store table to advertise the event. (Ranne, personal communication on 8.10.2015.)

Tu	Heat Damage	Tu	Squad Markings
12.11		19.11	
Wed	Open Painting	Wed	Open Painting
13.11		20.11	
Thu	Using Texture Paints	Thu	Layer Highlighting
14.11		21.11	
Fri	Kill Markings	Fri	Edge Highlighting
15.11		22.11	
Sat	Special Effects Paints	Sat	Basing
16.11		23.11	

Figure 11. Hobby Bar Menu showing all painting events over two weeks in 2013 (Facebook page of Warhammer – Helsinki, 2015)

- b) *Personal selling*: Gaming events are also advertised through conversation. It means that the staff will talk to customers personally invite them to the event. It is effective to the customers who visit the shop regularly. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)
- c) *Viral marketing*: The staff in Warhammer store value social network and ‘word of mouth’ to spread the news about their gaming events. The staff post interesting pictures and text on their Facebook page about an event and hope that those who see the message will ‘like’ and ‘share’ the event information. Relying on ‘word of mouth’ as another important marketing method, the staff encourage hobby players to spread the news, recommend and bring their friends to join their gaming events. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

### 6.2.3 Event logistics plan

Based on the theory of Bowdin, Allen, O’Toole, Harris & McDonnell (2013, 353), the guidelines of event logistics plan for Warhammer store are related to three components, namely ‘supply of customers, products and facilities’, ‘event site logistics’ and ‘event shutdown’.

#### 6.2.3.1 Supply of customers, products and facilities

- a) *Supply of customers*:
  - i. *Event registration*: Registration or not depends on the game’s nature. A lot of small or regular gaming events have been held and normally people just arrive in the store to attend the event without registration. However, registration is needed for larger gaming events, especially those that involve only two specific ‘army races’ opposing each other. The staff need to ensure how many people will attend and which army they will bring in order to assign people in different teams so that each side will start with equal point. Hobby players need to go to the store to sign on the sign-up

sheet for the game. (Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)  
The information to be filled included the participants' name and their phone number (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015).

- ii. *Handling the incoming participants:* During the day of event, the staff or manager should first greet and welcome whoever enters the shop. If the customer comes for the event, he would be asked to join the game (if it has been started) or wait at the painting table for the event to start (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015).
- b) *Supply of products and facilities:* The basic facilities used for a gaming event are gaming tables and the shop itself. A completed gaming table consists of four painted gaming boards joining together as terrain, with some landscapes and buildings on top. The facilities are already existed in the shop so nothing is rented or borrowed. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

Some games require the shop to have already painted miniatures. The mini-game 'Zombie Apocalypse' is an example; in the game a staff member needs to host and play as 'zombies' which hobby players eliminate them with their miniatures. Since 'zombies' keep entering the 'battlefield' in each round, the staff need to prepare their own painted 'zombie' miniatures. If hobby players can play with any miniatures of their choice, then the staff should prepare more 'powerful' miniature to increase the game difficulty in case some over-powered miniatures are brought to the game. (Ranne, personal communication on 8.10.2015.)

#### 6.2.3.2 Event site logistics

- a) *Route plan for people and materials:* The number of attendees has not been high enough so no route plan is needed so far. However, in order to ensure enough space for people or equipment, the shop demands hobby players not to leave their personal belongings all over the floor of the store. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication

on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.) Keeping the floor clean and spacious is important for safety reason so people can evacuate immediately without any obstacle in case of emergency.

- b) *Catering storage and distribution:* When the store was located at old address, drinking (except water) and eating were prohibited in the store. From the list of events on Facebook page of Warhammer – Helsinki (2015), only the Christmas event in 2012 had some biscuits and drink to offer. Therefore, there was rarely catering service in gaming event. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

At the new store located in another location, some snack and soft drink were offered to visitors during the Grant Re-opening event of Warhammer store on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2015. The difference is probably due to the fact that the floor in the old store was fully covered with carpet which was difficult to clean, but the new store only had a small carpet at the door. Besides, it seems that only special celebration day had catering service. The staff did not mention any place for catering storage but it would probably be the back room.

- c) *Moving of equipment and evacuation of people in case of emergency:* There is basically no emergency plan in any gaming event. They just had a first aid kit in the back room because none of their events were dangerous in nature. Calling the emergency services would be the ‘emergency plan’ if anything really bad happens. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)
- d) *Communication:* Because of the layout and small size of the store, the staff could see each other constantly. Therefore, the staff can communicate with each other via talking, yelling, facial expressions and gesture. It is not necessary to use two-way radio and phone. If a staff member is not seen in the store, he or she is probably on vacation or has a day-off. (Nuckols, personal

communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

#### 6.2.3.3 Event shutdown

There is a small clean-up activity after an event ends. Since drinking and eating are usually prohibited, there is not much trash to clean up. After an event, the staff will re-organized the gaming tables. For huge events, they would also ask attendees to help with the clean-up. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015)

#### 6.2.4 Risk analysis and evaluation

The following guidelines are written based on the nine steps of risk assessment for an event (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 320).

##### *Step 1: Understanding the context of risk management of the event*

The event context consists of event design, available resources, structure of event management, company culture, stakeholders, and SWOT analysis of the operating environment of the company (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2013, 321; Ritchie & Reid 2012, 156-157). However, event design may differ in special gaming events like Apocalypse games. The list below shows the general context of a Warhammer gaming event:

- a) *Event design*: Any Warhammer gaming event (check Chapter 6.1 'Initiating process phase' for general event objectives)
- b) *Available resources*: Everything in store, mainly tables and miniatures
- c) *Structure of event management*: Store manager and staff members
- d) *Stakeholders*: Store manager, staff members and event participants
- e) *Others*: Company culture and operating environment of Warhammer store were not mentioned by the former manager and staff members; therefore, it is assumed that they are not related to risk management in this case.



*Steps 2-6: Risk identification, effect, evaluation and control / mitigation*

Four possible risks in every Warhammer gaming event in general were identified by the former manager and staff members (*Step 2*). They are ‘injuries’, ‘theft’, ‘bad behaving hobby players’, and ‘too few participants’. The interviewees also described who would be affected and their harm or loss (*Step 3*). Based on this information, the risks are mapped in the risk assessment matrix as shown in Table 2 to evaluate the risk (*Step 4*). The rating of the risks depends on the risk propensity of the staff in Games Workshop. Here it is assumed that the risk propensity of the former staff in Warhammer store is medium (quite risk-tolerated) due to the author’s impression of their interview answer about risk management, as well as small store size that staff can quickly handle any risks. The mapping result in Table 2 shows the risk level of the four possible risks.

Table 2. Risk mapping of four possible risks of Warhammer gaming event (Ritchie & Reid 2012, 163)

Likelihood	Consequences				
	1	2	3	4	5
5	Medium	High	High	Very high	Very high
4	Medium	Medium	High	High	Very high
3	Low	Medium	High	High	High
2	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
1	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Consequences: 1-insignificant, 2-minor, 3 moderate, 4-major, 5-catastrophic Likelihood: 1-rare, 2-unlikely, 3-possible, 4-likely, 5-almost certain Risk level: Low, medium, high Risks: <span style="background-color: #f08080;"> </span> Injuries; <span style="background-color: #add8e6;"> </span> Theft; <span style="background-color: #ffcc99;"> </span> Bad behaving hobby players; <span style="background-color: #ccccff;"> </span> Too few participants					

The staff mentioned how they handled the risks (*Step 5 or 6*). Table 3 summarizes the steps 2-6 of risk analysis and evaluation of the four risks. The risk management strategies belong to either the category of risk control to avoid or prevent the risk (*Step 5*) or mitigating action to reduce the harm (*Step 6*); therefore, sometimes step 5 or step 6 is not applicable. Short description of risk analysis and evaluation of the four possible risks is listed below:

- a) *Injuries*: Store visitors may get small injuries like cuts or bruises (i.e. minor consequence) because of falling down or hitting on the tables. It happens very rarely (i.e. rare likelihood to occur). Therefore, the risk level is low. The staff remind the hobby players to be careful of their surroundings, and provide first aid treatment if needed. (Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

- b) *Theft*: Minor theft may occur. When hobby players are concentrated on their games, a thief may steal their belongings when the players do not pay attention on them. This risk may occur (i.e. possible likelihood to occur) because anyone can freely enter the shop. The harm and loss have been minor (i.e. minor consequence) so far but it depends on what are stolen. Therefore, the risk level is medium. The shop however try to prevent the risk by increasing their awareness to thief and reminding the customers to be careful with their belongings. (Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)
  
- c) *Bad behaving hobby players*: Serious hobby players may become really upset and behave badly because of losing in a game. The mood of the game would be ruined as other hobby players playing the same game are also affected (i.e. moderate consequence). This risk could happen in almost every game as long as there are winners and losers (i.e. likely to occur). Hence, the risk level is high. When it occurs, the staff need to 'put a positive spin' on this situation by guiding the sad player to see positive aspect of his side and talk to him before he loses his control. If the player still cannot behave, the staff will ask him to leave. (Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015.)
  
- d) *Too few participants*: The event is not as fun as the staff hope, so there are too few participants joining the game. This situation is unexpected but the risk is possible to occur. Due to this negative experience, hobby players may not come to future event again (i.e. major consequence). Hence, the risk level is high. To prevent this, the staff should invite as many players as possible to an event. In addition, they usually 'save' this situation by adding something fun to the game or personalizing the game for the attendees who do not look as happy as expected. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015.)

Table 3. Steps 2-6 of risk analysis and evaluation of four possible risks for Warhammer gaming event in general

Steps	Risk analysis and evaluation			
2. Identify possible risks	Injuries	Theft	Bad behaving hobby players	Too few participants
3. Identify who may be affected and how	Store visitors; minor injuries like bruises and cut	Participants whose items are stolen; minor loss	Other participants; become disturbed	The store; fewer participants in future events
4. Evaluate the identified risks (risk level)	Low	Medium	High	High
5. Control the risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remind hobby players to be careful of the surroundings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase awareness to the thief</li> <li>Remind participants to be careful with their belongings</li> </ul>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite as many players as possible</li> </ul>
6. Perform mitigating actions to reduce potential damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide first aid treatment if needed</li> </ul>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk to the person</li> <li>Request the person to leave</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add something fun to the game</li> <li>Personalizing the game</li> </ul>

*Step 7: Consider any specific event risks*

Warhammer store has organized different kinds of events that have different gaming design. Besides the four possible risks, different events would have some specific risks. Three special gaming events, namely Apocalypse games, Gathering of Might and Beginners' gaming day/night, are selected and their specific risks are suggested based on their gaming design:

- a) *Apocalypse games*: The game requires hobby players to bring over 2,000 points of miniatures. Some hobby players may accidentally count the points wrong and bring too few miniatures to play. Consequently, each side of the gaming table does not have equal amount of points or participants, then the game becomes unfair to one side of opponents.
- b) *Gathering of Might*: This event requires hobby players to complete miniatures of certain army which will be used later for gaming (Facebook page of Warhammer – Helsinki, 2015). Some hobby players may accidentally build

wrong group of miniatures. Then, they are not qualified to play in the event and become very upset because of wasting huge amount of time and effort to build the wrong type of miniatures and not being able to play the game.

- c) *Beginners' gaming day/night*: There could be too few beginners attending the event if the marketing message does not reach them. Reserved gaming tables are left empty the whole day/night.

*Step 8: Record the findings and Step 9: Review and revise risk assessment*

The store does not have any risk evaluation system nor record of risk assessment. One of the staff members commented that even if such system existed, it would not be useful. The shop only depends on staff who 'know to keep an eye on people at all times'. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.) This is probably due to the size of the shop, which is small enough that staff can easily see everything happen there, and response promptly for any situation.

#### 6.2.5 Evaluation and feedback process

The shop does not have any official or 'real' performance evaluation system. The following guidelines of evaluation and feedback process is roughly based on the 'eight steps of conducting event evaluation' (Tull 2012, 176).

*Step 1: Decide the need to conduct event evaluation*

Although the shop does not have performance evaluation system, the former staff still evaluated the success of every gaming event so that they could improve next time.

*Step 2: Identify focus of evaluation*

Depending on the nature of an event, the manager and staff members set up a set of goals beforehand. The goals identified before include 'number of attendees', 'whether a product is promoted', 'increase in sales on event day and near future', as well as 'attendees feeling happy and having fun'. (Nuckols, personal communication on

5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

*Steps 3-6: Select evaluation approach and model(s) of evaluation framework, develop data collection method, data collection and data analysis*

As evaluation focus are identified, the staff should select evaluation approach (*Step 3*), model(s) of evaluation framework (*Step 4*), develop data collection method(s) (*Step 5*), collect data according to the selected methods and analyse the data (*Step 6*) as stated in the theory of ‘Eight steps for conducting event evaluation’ (Tull 2012, 176). However, the staff in Warhammer store probably do not need to go through every step in practice. Table 4 summarizes the evaluation and feedback process of the four identified evaluation focus. The process is also described below (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015):

- a) *Number of attendees:* In order to know the number of attendees in the event, quantitative approach is needed (*Step 3*). The staff need to count number of attendees during the day as a data collection method (*Step 5*). Selection of model(s) of evaluation framework is not applicable for this attribute. If the number of attendees have reached the goal, then the event is considered to be successful (*Step 6*).
- b) *Whether a product is promoted:* To know whether a product is promoted, the staff can check sales of that product (fiscal data), hence financial approach is used. Besides, the number of product sold and the amount of income earned from the sales are countable, hence the financial approach is quantitative in nature (*Step 3*). The appropriate data collection method would be checking the remaining stock or income from the product (*Step 5*). Selection of model(s) of evaluation framework is not applicable for this attribute. If target number of product sold and income are achieved, then the event is considered to be successful (*Step 6*).
- c) *Increase in sales on event day and near future:* Level of sales is fiscal data, so financial approach is used. The level of sales is shown as euro currency,

which is countable, so the financial approach is quantitative in nature (Step 3). To collect the data, the staff check the sales level from their sales record (Step 5). Selection of model(s) of evaluation framework is not applicable for this attribute. If the level of sales has increased at target level, then the event is considered to be successful (Step 6).

- d) *Attendees feeling happy and having fun*: The data of this attribute is related to participants' emotion, which is intangible. Hence, qualitative approach is selected (Step 3). This attribute is about studying attendees' experience of the event, so the model of evaluation framework is 'ethnographic profile' (Step 4). To collect feedback, the staff can just observe the attendees or ask them personally (Step 5) about what they thought of the event, what they wish to see and what kinds of event they wish to have next time (Step 6).

Table 4. Steps 2-6 of performance evaluation and feedback process

Steps		Evaluation and feedback process of 4 evaluation focuses			
2.	Identify focus of evaluation	Number of attendees	Whether a product is promoted	Increase in sales on event day and near future	Attendees feeling happy and having fun
3.	Select suitable and practical evaluation approach	Quantitative approach	Financial approach (Quantitative)	Financial approach (Quantitative)	Qualitative approach
4.	Select model(s) of evaluation framework	N/A	N/A	N/A	Ethnographic profile
5.	Develop appropriate data collection method(s)	Head count	Check the stock or income from the product	Check the sales level of event day and near future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation</li> <li>• Unstructured interview</li> </ul>
6.	Data collection and data analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Count the attributes after the event</li> <li>• Event is successful if goals are achieved.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees' emotion and behaviour</li> <li>• Talk to attendees on event day or later</li> <li>• Know about their thought and wish</li> </ul>

*Step 7: Prepare an event evaluation report and Step 8: Analyse what should be improved based on the report*

No evaluation report has been produced by Warhammer store. The evaluation is based on what the staff have observed and encountered during the event, as well as

individually asked feedback from customers. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.) However, it is recommended to keep record of all previous events and their evaluation result, because it will become a great source of reference for improvement and brainstorming of new event.

#### 6.2.6 Event schedule (Action plan)

Event schedule should be created to list out all the preparation tasks needed before a gaming event. The preparation tasks of Warhammer gaming event depend on the event and its timeframe. The time for preparation varies from five minutes to several months depending on the nature of the preparation and event. For large events like Campaign Apocalypse and Armies on Parade, more time is given to promotion to attract more people can join. For regular Gaming Night/Day, the preparation task is just setting up the gaming tables during the previous night and it takes merely few minutes. For special events like Campaign Apocalypse and Zombie Apocalypse, time ranging a few days or weeks is spent on designing the game scenario or building miniatures and terrains for game hosting. For painting-related events like Gathering of Might, the shop needs to spare more time for hobby players to finish their own miniatures before the gaming part of the event. (Facebook page of Warhammer – Helsinki, 2015; Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

Normally, no formal action plan is created for gaming event. The staff usually just simply write down what are needed and complete them. It is because the shop is small and basically just one to maximum four staff members do the preparation. The sequence of preparation tasks is not strict but those which takes long time will be started earlier. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.) However, creating an event schedule together with a resource list is recommended, because it facilitates the staff to prepare the event systematically and ensure nothing is missing. It can also be used an overview of the preparation progress.

A simple template of event schedule for Warhammer store is demonstrated in Figure 12. The event schedule presented as a Gantt chart was created by using Excel 2013. It includes some general tasks for preparing a Warhammer gaming event. The first column is product breakdown structure (PBS) which is the scope of work, i.e. the major event components for organizing the event. For Warhammer store, the PBS would include game design, decor, catering (which can be exceptional), marketing and risk management. The second column is work breakdown structure (WBS) including all the tasks required to complete the event components. Each task is given a code (the third column), code of next task (the fourth column), person in charge (the fifth column), duration of preparation (the sixth column), estimated start date (the seventh column) and estimated end date (the eighth column). On the right hand side, dates are marked at the top; as the task is being proceeded, the corresponding grids are coloured until the task is complete.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
	PBS	WBS	Code	next task	Person in charge	Duration	Estimated start date	Estimated end date	1-Jan	2-Jan	3-Jan	4-Jan
1	Game design	Design game scenario	1									
2	Decor	Set up gaming tables	2									
3		Prepare miniatures	3									
4		Prepare terrain	4									
5	Catering	Buy food/drink	5									
6		Store food/drink	6									
7	Marketing	Design flyer	7									
8		Review flyer	8									
9		Print flyer	9									
10		Inform player	10									
11		Design Facebook message	11									
12		Review Facebook message	12									
13		Post Facebook message	13									
14	Risk management	Prepare first aid kit	14									

Figure 12. A template of event schedule for a Warhammer gaming event

### 6.3 Implementing process phase

At this phase, the store manager and staff members should do the preparation tasks according to the plans and update the plans if anything is changed. The biggest problem encountered by the staff during this phase would be not coming up with new games. A lot of different kinds of events have been held in the shop, so it would be difficult to do something different every time. When the staff run out of idea, they



would try to figure a new game by altering some ready-made game scenarios from existing Games Workshop publications. Problems at this phase happen occasionally; instead they normally arise during the event. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

There is no technical facility or equipment testing when preparation is done, because the event usually just involves the gaming tables. Sometimes, the staff may lightly play-test the scenario of a specific gaming event to ensure that it is workable and fun. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

After preparation, the staff members double check everything with the manager. When the staff feel that the game design would be fun, then the manager approves to run the event. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.) No pre-evaluation report is needed.

#### 6.4 Event execution phase

At this phase, the event is approved and executed. The staff manager should monitor the event and ensure everything is proceeded as planned. The followings should be monitored during a gaming event (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015):

- a) People are participating, excited and having fun.
- b) The flow of the game is smooth. When problems arise, the staff improvise, adapt the event or figure a creative solution around it.
- c) The staff should check the time consumed in a game would not be too long, so other participants can also play.
- d) None of the participants are bullying or tease the others; everyone behaves during the game. The staff could try to talk with the problematic players; if the bad behaviours continue, the player is asked to leave.

- e) The staff should remember to encourage the participants to buy products before/during/after the event.
- f) The staff should keep an eye on the surroundings to ensure no one is stealing.

## 6.5 Event closing

When an event ends, the staff thank all the attendees and tell them to read the shop's Facebook page for future games. After all attendees have left, the manager and staff members will have a short debriefing meeting, in which they discuss how the event went, evaluate its success, and make sure everyone has achieved their goal. They thank each other and discuss any feedback. The staff would also personally ask the attendees about their experience. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

## 6.6 Evaluation and after-sales phase

The evaluation is usually done during the debriefing meeting at 'event closing' phase. The staff also discuss how to improve their next event during their weekly training sessions. Sometimes, they also evaluate all major events together and discuss what to improve or keep for next time. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

The staff do not provide after-sales service for those who bought anything during a gaming event. All customers will be treated the same way and offered the painting table to paint their miniatures for free. The staff also teach and help every customer maximize the 'ability' of their miniatures free-of-charge. In short, there is no special treatment to any event attendee. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015; Voutilainen, personal communication on 4.8.2015; Wennerqvist, personal communication on 20.8.2015.)

After a gaming event, the staff would still encourage participants to buy products related to the event. If some attendees have borrowed some miniatures from the shop to play in the event, the staff also encourage them to buy the products they have just tried. (Nuckols, personal communication on 5.8.2015.)

## 7 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this thesis is to create some useful guidelines for Games Workshop's Warhammer store in Helsinki. The guidelines aim to help the store hold a well-prepared Warhammer gaming event, which can attract more event participants as well as in the long term increase more customers and sales level.

As theoretical support, event process and motivation factors for joining a gaming event were studied. In order to design suitable guidelines for the store, one former manager and two former staff members were interviewed in order to gain an insight into how Warhammer store plans a gaming event in practice. Eight hobby players were interviewed about what motivates them to join a Warhammer gaming event. Guidelines were designed based on the theory and interview result afterwards.

An event process is composed of six phases, which are initiating process phase, planning process phase, implementing process phase, event execution phase, event closing, as well as evaluation and after-sales phase. The whole event process forms the basic framework of the guidelines.

At initiating process phase, the reasons or needs of holding an event are identified, so that event description is generated. The event objectives include attracting hobby players to play in the shop, creating excitement, creating crowd to catch passers-by's attention, letting players to test their army, challenging players, and proving constant hobby activity to hobby players. Resources available are the staff and everything inside the store.

At planning process phase, important event components are planned based on the event description. The relevant event components for Warhammer store include event design, event marketing plan, event logistics plan, risk analysis and evaluation, evaluation and feedback process, and event schedule.

- a) *Event design:* The games are set according to players' motivation factor to join an event. It is found that 'having a good time and fun' and 'socializing with friends' are the two most important motivation factors. Simple and non-competitive games with interesting ideas are preferable. Physical settings like decoration and music enhance the event atmosphere.
- b) *Event marketing plan:* 4 Ps of event marketing is applied. For Warhammer store, 'products' are gaming tables and miniatures (main 'products'), manger and staff members, catering, event atmosphere and good event programming; 'price' is free entry and some entry requirements; 'place' is the store itself; and 'promotion' methods are advertising (in Facebook, flyers and posters), personal selling, and viral marketing.
- c) *Event logistics plan:* It comprises three components, which are 'supply of customers, products and facilities', 'event site logistics' and 'event shut-down'. 'Supply of customers' is usually players who just walk-in to join an event, but registration is needed for larger events. Products and facilities are basically everything available in the store. No route plan is needed, but hobby players are required to leave their bags under the tables in order to keep the aisle clear. Catering is rare and the location for storage would be the back room. There is no emergency plan, but the store has a first aid kit and they will call emergency services when needed. No communication plan is needed because the staff members can constantly reach each other. After an event, a small clean-up is needed.
- d) *Risk analysis and evaluation:* Nine steps of risk assessment for an event were applied. Some risks identified by the former staff are 'injuries', 'theft', 'bad behaving hobby players' and 'too few participants'. After evaluation, risk control and mitigation strategies are suggested for each risk. Some specific

risks for specific events like Apocalypse games, Gathering of Might and Beginners' gaming day/night were identified by the author for Warhammer store's reference. The Warhammer store, however, does not have any risk evaluation system or documentation of risk assessment. Risk handling mainly relies on the staff's experience.

- e) *Evaluation and feedback process*: Following the eight steps of evaluation and feedback process, four evaluation focuses - 'number of attendees', 'whether a product is promoted', 'increase in sales on event day and near future', as well as 'attendees feeling happy and having fun' were identified and evaluated. Different evaluation approaches, models of evaluation framework or data collection methods were selected respectively. Quantitative data like number of attendees, stock and sales level were analysed to check whether the goal is achieved. The staff also talk with attendees later about the event. However, there is no evaluation report.
- f) *Event schedule*: A template of event schedule as a Gantt chart was designed for Warhammer store to illustrate the progress of preparation tasks. Some components inside the template include product breakdown structure (PBS), work breakdown structure (WBS), codes, person in charge, duration as well as estimated start and end dates. The staff can colour the corresponding grids on the right side of the chart as the preparation tasks are proceeded.

During implementing process phase, all the plans from the previous phase are used as a guide to do preparation. According to the theory, every facility is tested and evaluated after preparation, and pre-evaluation report is made for stakeholders who will announce the execution of the event. For Warhammer store, no technical test for facility or equipment is needed; instead, the staff just play-test the game scenario for specific gaming events.

At event execution phase, the event is executed and monitored. In theory, some steps of evaluation is commenced. For Warhammer store, the event is approved by the store manager. The staff need to monitor different aspects of an event, including the participants, flow of the game, time consumed in a game and the surroundings to

prevent thief. They also need to encourage participants to buy something at this phase.

At event closing, a debriefing meeting is held, in which all stakeholders and staff are acknowledged and their feedback is collected. The staff in Warhammer store also ask attendees for their feedback. At this stage, the staff also evaluate the success of the event.

At evaluation and after-sales phase, according to the theory, evaluation plan is proceeded with data analysis, production of evaluation report and discussion with stakeholders; while after-sales service is provided to customers during the event. For Warhammer store, evaluation is usually done in the debriefing meeting, and no report is produced. Besides, there is no special after-sales service for customers in the event. All customers are treated the same. At this stage, event participants are still encouraged to buy the miniatures they have tried during an event.

The theory of event process is not fully applicable for Warhammer store, especially the evaluation and after-sales phase. The planning of Warhammer gaming event in practice is simpler than what the theory suggests. The store lacks documentation of the risk analysis and evaluation of event performance. Besides, their ‘action plan’ is very simple and their risk management strategies rely on the staff’s experience and response. The overall simplicity is mainly due to the size of the store and scale of the gaming event. The marketing after an event can also be improved. The study about motivation factors to join a gaming event was interesting, yet more hobby players’ opinions are preferred. Therefore, the author would like to give some recommendations regarding to these matters to Warhammer store and suggest some possibilities for future studies in Chapter 8 ‘Recommendations’.

## 8 RECOMMENDATIONS

### 8.1 For Warhammer store

- a) *Documentation*: The Warhammer store does not keep any official record or evaluation report. It is recommended to document any decision made for a gaming event or other interesting findings for future improvement. Producing the following documents are highly recommended:
  - i. *Book of event ideas*: The book collects all the event ideas that have been done in the store, other creative ideas generated during the brainstorming session, collected from Games Workshop publication and from other stores in Europe. It will be useful for idea stimulation.
  - ii. *Evaluation report*: After each event, staff can create a very simple evaluation report about event performance, feedback from staff members and participants, as well as suggestion for improvement during the debriefing meeting. It does not have to be complicated but it serves a great reference for improving other gaming events in the future.
- b) *Lockers to secure players' belongings*: Currently, hobby players just place their belongings under the gaming tables. It is rather difficult to notice if someone steals from there when everyone is focus on tabletops. Small lockers can be installed in the shop for hobby players to secure their belongings. Players can then play without worries. The staff can also be more focus on socializing with customers and maintaining the gaming atmosphere.
- c) *Host more painting-related mini games*: This kind of event encourages hobby players to build and paint a few new miniatures which can be used to play some mini games. This kind of event have many benefits. First, it will attract those who enjoy painting and would like to try new army units. Second, mini games are simple to hold. Third, the shop will gain sales as participants buy new miniatures. Forth, mini games are fast-paced and can accommodate many players, hence increasing people's chance to play. Fifth, since many

people play together, they can socialize with other participants and have fun, which are important attribute to their motivation to join a gaming event.

- d) *Public relations after an event:* After an event, the staff can invite the attendees to share their stories, pictures and videos about the event onto the Warhammer Facebook page. Not only the attendees but also all other visitors of the Facebook page can see, ‘like’ and ‘share’ the awesomeness of the event. This interaction on the Facebook page increases publicity of Warhammer gaming event and attract more people to join other events in the future. The staff can also evaluate the success of the event from people’s reaction on the posts.

## 8.2 For future studies

- a) *Practice of these guidelines:* Future studies can be related to applying these guidelines in practice and testing their effectiveness in the new Warhammer store. After an event, feedback can be collected from the new staff for improvement. For larger or special events, there would be some alternations to these guidelines, so that guidelines for these specific events could be created. In the long term, researcher can even observe the effect of these guidelines on number of customers and sales level. In addition, testing the guidelines in the new store is highly recommended because adjustment of the risk evaluation plan and logistics plan would be needed due to the layout of the new store.
- b) *Interview more hobby players:* More hobby players should be interviewed in future studies. Because of time limit, only a few hobby players were interviewed. Although they are very experienced players, the overall result on players’ motivation to join a gaming event could be different if more hobby players are interviewed. Besides, new players and female players could also be involved. Questions for new players could be about what they wish and expect in a gaming event; and for female players could be about what attract them to play Warhammer because there are relatively few female players nowadays.



## 9 FINAL WORDS

It has been an interesting journey to explore the Warhammer game and its gaming event. First, the cores of the game – self-made miniatures, terrains, stories and rules that coexist on a tabletop game have aroused the author’s curiosity to study more about it. Second, as the majority of Warhammer hobby players are males, it was an unusual opportunity to understand male gamers’ world in business perspective. Third, the author would like to explore the secrets of holding a successful gaming event, and how holding a gaming event could be related to IBML study programme. It was really surprising that holding an event indeed requires an event organizer to know many aspects included in IBML study, like marketing, logistics, risk management, creating project plan, communication, budgeting and so on. After all, an event is also a tool to attract customers and sales.

The author could luckily find some relevant literature about event planning. It was interesting to see how theory and real life practice differ. There are many different things needed to be considered as stated in theory; however, in reality, the planning can be simple and short. There are very few studies about motivation to join an event. However, the motivation factors found in the literature were very useful for studying Warhammer hobby players’ motivation.

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## INTERVIEW WITH HOBBY PLAYER

Interviewee:

Date of interview:

1. How long have you been playing Warhammer and Warhammer 40k?
2. How often do you play Warhammer and Warhammer 40k?
3. What do you like about Warhammer and Warhammer 40k?
4. What motivate you to join a Warhammer (or Warhammer 40k) gaming event?
5. Which kind of Warhammer (or Warhammer 40k) gaming event do you usually go? Which one do you like most?
6. What do you like most in a gaming event?
7. What do you dislike most in a gaming event?
  
8. Please **rate** the importance of the following items (1= least important; 5= most important) for participating a Warhammer or Warhammer 40k gaming event:
  - a) Socializing with friends
  - b) Improving friendship
  - c) Competing with other players
  - d) Testing your army and skills
  - e) Enjoying your time outside home
  - f) Having a good time and fun
  - g) Being able to participate in the game
  - h) Satisfaction from previous gaming event
  - i) Recommendation from other players

## INTERVIEW WITH FORMER STAFF AND MANAGER

Interviewee:

Date of interview:

A. Initiating process phase:

1. Why Warhammer and Warhammer 40K gaming event is held in the shop?  
How often a gaming event is held?
2. Besides the staff and participants, who are also involved in a gaming event in general?
3. What are the resources available for holding a gaming event? Is there any budget?
4. How do you generate an event idea?
5. What are the constraints in general for holding a gaming event? How do you handle the constraints?

B. Planning process phase:

Event design:

1. What kinds of gaming event have been done before?
2. Besides the gaming itself, do you offer other side-activities like catering and performance during a gaming event?
3. Is there any specific décor or physical setting to increase the event atmosphere for a gaming event?
4. What are the roles of manager and staff in a gaming event?

Marketing:

1. How do you attract people to join a gaming event?
2. Do hobby players need to pay or do anything in order to join a gaming event?  
How do they register to the event?
3. How do you inform hobby players about a gaming event?
4. How do you advertise a gaming event? (E.g. decoration in shop, sending emails, etc.)

Event logistics plan:

1. Do you have any arrangement to handle the incoming players?

2. What facilities are involved in a gaming event? How do you handle the movement of those facilities? Have you ever needed to borrow/rent facilities from other suppliers?
3. Is there any route plan for flow of people and facilities/equipment?
4. If there is catering service in a gaming event, is there plan for storage and distribution of the food and drink?
5. What is the emergency plan in a gaming event? Is there any first aid kit?
6. How would you communicate with other staff who is not seen? (e.g. two-way radio, phone)
7. What are the clean-up activities when a gaming event is ended? (e.g. dismiss the crowd, cleaning)

#### Risk analysis and evaluation:

1. What are risks in general when holding a gaming event?
2. What can be possible harm or loss from those risks?
3. How do you handle those risks?
4. Do you have any existing system to evaluate risks of a gaming event? Could you describe it if it exists?
5. Do you create any record of risk assessment of a gaming event?

#### Evaluation and feedback process:

1. Do you have any existing system to evaluate the performance of a gaming event? Could you describe it if it exists?
2. If a gaming event is evaluated, what aspect of the event should be evaluated?
3. How do you collect feedback from players of a gaming event?
4. Do you need to prepare an evaluation report after each gaming event? To whom do you send the report?

#### Event schedule:

1. In general, what are the preparation tasks before a gaming event is held? Is there any sequence of the tasks?
2. How long do those preparation activities take?
3. How many people are needed to do the preparation?
4. Do you create action plan for the preparation?

#### C. Implementing process phase:

1. Have you encountered any problem during preparation? How did you cope with it? Did you need to change anything in the gaming event because of the problem?
2. Do you need to test or evaluate any facilities/equipment when preparation is done?

3. How do you approve the execution of a gaming event after preparation? (e.g. report to any stakeholder for approval)

D. Event execution phase:

1. What should be monitored during a gaming event?

E. Event closing:

1. When a gaming event is ended, do you hold any debriefing meeting with stakeholders and staff? What is the purpose of the meeting in general? (e.g. collecting feedback, thank)

F. Evaluation and after-sales phase:

1. Do you have any meeting with stakeholders and staff to discuss about improvement of next event? What is the discussion based on? (e.g. evaluation report, feedback)
2. Do you have after-sales service for those who bought anything during a gaming event? What are they?
3. Do you have any marketing activities for participants after a gaming event? What are they?

G. Other questions:

1. What should be done in order to have a successful gaming event?
2. What would attract players to join a gaming event?
3. What should be avoid when holding a gaming event?
4. What kind of Warhammer and Warhammer 40k gaming event has been the most successful and liked? Why?
5. What was the least favourite Warhammer and Warhammer 40k gaming event? Why?
6. What kind of Warhammer and Warhammer 40k gaming event is the best manageable in the shop?



## APPENDIX 3

RECORD OF GAMING EVENT FROM 1 OCTOBER 2011 TO 24 OCTOBER 2015 SHOWN IN THE EVENT SESSION OF WARHAMMER'S FACEBOOK PAGE (FACEBOOK PAGE OF WARHAMMER – HELSINKI, 2015)

Category	Event	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Warhammer 40K	500 points		2				2
	1,000-2,000 points		1		1		2
	2,000-2,500 points						0
	Apocalypse			2	11	1	14
Warhammer	500 points						0
	1,000-2,000 points		1		3		4
	2,000-2,500 points						0
	End time				1	1	2
Celebrations	After-Christmas (Warhammer 40K)				1		1
	After-Christmas (Warhammer)				1		1
	After-Christmas (Hobbit)				1		1
	Christmas party (no specific army)		1				1
	Ski week holiday			1			1
	Warhammer 40K 25 <sup>th</sup> birthday		1				1
	Store birthday	1	1	1	1		4
	Release day (e.g. White Dwarf, rulebook)		2				2
	Grant re-opening					1	1
Workshop	Workshop (e.g. Terrain, model, weathering)		2	7	1		10
Help for beginners	Beginner's Gaming night (Warhammer and Warhammer 40K)					1	1
	Beginner's day (Warhammer 40K)				1		1
	Beginner's day (Warhammer)				1		1
Specific army start-up and play	Challenge (40K)				1		1
	Challenge (Warhammer)				1		1
Army start-up / existing army enhancement	War Camps				1		1
Random army start-up and play	Gathering of Might (Warhammer and					1	1

	Warhammer 40K)						
	Gathering of Might (Warhammer 40K)				1		1
	Gathering of Might (Warhammer)					1	1
Specific army start-up, enhancement via game	Army building campaign (Warhammer Age of Sigma)					1	1
Painting competition	The Fang / Young Fang (for aged 16 or under)		2	2	1		5
	Armies on Parade		1		1	2	4
	Mobilize for Armies on Parade		4				4
	Character painting competition		1				1
Others (Hobbit)			4	1	1		6
Total		1	23	14	30	9	77